

Per. 1419 e. 2973
1859-62

*



THE
MOTHER'S MAGAZINE,
AND
FAMILY PREACHER



Know this ark is charm'd
With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employed,
With spells that impious Egypt never knew :
With invocations to the living God,
I twisted every tender reed together,
And with a prayer did every osier weave.—Mrs. H. MOORE.

Mothers, above all other human agents, hold in their hands the momentous trust of moulding the intellect and the heart of successive generations.

If all women were the Christians they ought to be, how quickly would the world be filled with the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ! The coming generation might live in a new earth, and celebrate the final triumphs of the cross.

LONDON :
JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,
NORTH SIDE ST. PAUL'S, AND PATERNOSTER ROW.

1859.

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
SKETCHES AND ESSAYS:—			
<u>A few facts for Mothers</u>	255	<u>I die in Jesus</u>	206
<u>Alfred the Great</u>	226	<u>Idols</u>	217
<u>All things work together</u>	135	<u>In thee do I put my trust</u>	134
<u>A message to mothers</u>	58	<u>Israel's sin and Messiah's love</u> ..	252
<u>A Mother's love</u>	4	<u>Jesus Wept</u>	87
<u>An Alphabet of Christian Counsels and cautions</u>	230	<u>Life</u>	13
<u>A retrospect of life</u>	148	<u>Little Jane</u>	200
<u>A Sabbath school in heaven</u>	268	<u>Little Lydia</u>	81
<u>A voice to mothers</u>	31	<u>Lord, that our eyes may be opened</u>	57
<u>Charming domestic picture</u>	184	<u>Love in marriage</u>	129
<u>Comfort for bereaved parents</u>	34	<u>Mirthfulness</u>	110
<u>Comfort for the feeble-minded</u> ..	52	<u>Not a cloud to be seen</u>	145
<u>Directions for reading the Scriptures</u>	102	<u>Oh for more feeling</u>	196
<u>Do you mean it?</u>	61	<u>Our best friend</u>	183
<u>Dress</u>	270	<u>Praise the Lord</u>	269
<u>Earthly and heavenly hallelujahs</u>	248	<u>Prayer</u>	11
<u>Family duties</u>	245	<u>Prepare to meet thy God</u>	15
<u>Family Prayer</u>	274	<u>Receive my spirit</u>	60
<u>Family religion</u>	77	<u>Rest in Jesus</u>	101
<u>Go and tell Jesus</u>	1	<u>Secret Prayer</u>	86
<u>God's care for his people</u>	156	<u>Sudden conversion</u>	83
<u>God's plan of your life</u>	159	<u>Tarry not</u>	265
<u>Hannah</u>	272	<u>Teach children to pray</u>	40
<u>Happy Rhoda</u>	121	<u>Ten golden rules</u>	64
<u>He is a member of the church who is a member of Christ</u>	112	<u>The Child is dead</u>	73
<u>Hera and her New Testament</u> ..	97	<u>The discipline of daily life</u>	14
<u>Hints for the Lord's-day</u>	63	<u>The exhaustless fulness</u>	55
<u>Holiness and happiness</u>	16	<u>The evening star</u>	128
<u>Home the true sphere of woman</u>	241	<u>The first step of a revival</u>	29
<u>"How can I make my heart love Christ?"</u>	193	<u>The four peace-texts</u>	169
<u>Hymns</u>	275	<u>The lambs of Christ's flock made a blessing</u>	202
<u>I am the door</u>	82	<u>The lapse of time</u>	153
<u>I can do something for Jesus</u>	222	<u>The object of faith</u>	179
		<u>The little thinker</u>	275
		<u>The morning cometh</u>	106

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
<u>The soul's excuse</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>Why Christ expects his disciples</u>	
<u>The things that pass away</u>	<u>132</u>	<u>to do more than others</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>The voice of the ocean</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>Why do I pray so little?</u>	<u>157</u>
<u>The work of God in families</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>Will our earthly Christian friend-</u>	
<u>Things to give</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>ships be continued in heaven. .</u>	<u>172</u>
<u>Things to keep</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>Will you be saved?</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>To Mothers</u>	<u>25</u>		
<u>To Parents</u>	<u>39</u>		
<u>Trust the Pilot</u>	<u>104</u>		
<u>What hinders revival?</u>	<u>49</u>		
<u>What is to be done with our</u>			
<u>Charley. By Mrs. H. B. Stowe</u>	<u>35</u>		

POETRY :—

<u>Daybreak</u>	<u>111</u>
<u>Hymn for the New Year</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>276</u>
<u>Where is my child?</u>	<u>207</u>

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

<u>Faith the source of spiritual profit. By the Rev. A. Boyd</u>	<u>113</u>
<u>False Teachers. By the Rev. H. Melvill, B.D.</u>	<u>257</u>
<u>Past help an earnest of the future. By the Rev. H. Melvill, B.D.</u>	<u>137</u>
<u>Present with the Lord. By the Venerable Archdeacon Davies, M.A.</u>	<u>161</u>
<u>Redemption and its obligations. By the Rev. J. C. Miller, M.A.</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Simeon. By the Rev. N. Adams, D.D.</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>The lepers ingratitude. By the Rev. D. Moore, M.A.</u>	<u>185</u>
<u>The love of God. By the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Ripon</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>The shortness and frailty of human life. By the Rev. D. Moore, M.A. ..</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>The Spirit's intercession in prayer. By the Rev. D. Moore, M.A.</u>	<u>209</u>
<u>The threefold cause of a rejected gospel. By the Rev. D. Moore, M.A. ..</u>	<u>277</u>
<u>Trifling with impressions. By the Rev. H. Melvill, B.D.</u>	<u>233</u>

THE
MOTHER'S MAGAZINE.



Sketches and Essays.

GO AND TELL JESUS.*

Go and tell Jesus *everything*. You have much to disclose—tell him all. Tell him of the world's woundings, of the saints' smitings, of the spirit's tremblings, and of the heart's anguish. Tell him your low frames, your mental despondencies, your gloomy fears, beclouded evidences, and veiled hope. Tell him your bodily infirmities,—your waning health, failing vigour, progressive disease,—the pain, the lassitude, the nervousness, the weary couch, the sleepless pillow, which no one knows but him. Tell him of your dread of death, how you recoil from dying, and how dark and rayless appears the body's last resting place. Tell him how all beyond it looks so dreary, starless, hopeless. Tell him you fear you do not know him, love him, believe in him. Tell him that there is not a being in the universe—none in heaven or on earth—whom you desire as himself. Tell him all the temptations, the difficulties, the hidden trials and sorrows of your path,—tell, O tell him *all*! There is nothing that you may not in the confidence of love and in the simplicity of faith tell Jesus—no temporal want—no spiritual sorrow. "Casting *all* your care upon him, for he careth for you." "Ye people, *pour out your heart* before him." Tell him your desolateness as a widow—your friendlessness as an orphan—your sadness and solitude as one whose heart is overwhelmed within you. Go, and lose yourself in the love of Jesus—hide you in the

* From a Thought for the Year 1859. By the Rev. Octavius Winslow, D.D.

wounds of Jesus—wash you in the blood of Jesus—replenish you from the fulness of Jesus, and recline upon the bosom of Jesus. Think not this a weak, sentimental Christianity to which we are urging you. We know no other than this,—no other which so appeals to the intellect, as to the most sacred feelings and affections of the heart. This telling Jesus everything in our individual history—this recognition of his government in all our ways, and this reliance upon his power and love in all our circumstances—is the legitimate employment of a faith at once the sublimest exercise of the mind as it is the loveliest and holiest impulse of the heart. Here is a faith that recedes from the objects of sense, and “beholds him that is invisible;” that quits the region of illusions and shadows, and entwines itself with infinite realities; that carries all the interests and relations, responsibilities and accountabilities of time into the solemn, awful, and unalterable decision of eternity. In urging you, Christian reader, to the exercise of a privilege of personal contact and close transaction with Jesus, we have but endeavoured to simplify a principle in its application to all the minutiae of life, the divinest, loftiest and sublimest that can possibly task the powers of the human soul. All the splendour of human philosophy, science, and prowess, pales before the moral grandeur which gathers, like a halo, around a mortal man reposing at the feet of the Incarnate God—unveiling his whole soul in all the child-like confidence of a faith that grasps Jehovah. At this focal point must meet the profound philosopher and the untutored peasant; the matured man and the little child—all taught, counselled, and supplied at the feet of Jesus.

It only remains that we briefly glance at the *sanctifying influence* this operation of faith must naturally exert.

The first result to which we refer is, *the close intimacy with Christ* which the habit cultivates. Human society will illustrate this. It is close intercourse with our fellow-beings that removes ignorance, dissolves prejudice, and unseals in our hearts the hidden springs of confidence, affection, and sympathy. How many of the Lord’s people stand aloof from each other’s society simply from not knowing one another. Did believers in the Lord Jesus more frequently meet in council, in service, in communion, how soon and entirely would the coldness, the party-spirit, the jealousies, the erroneous impressions vanish which now, alas! divide the body of Christ, all whose members are ‘members one of another.’ Knowing each other better, they would love each other more, and loving each other more, there would be more ready concession made to the freedom

of judgment and claims of conscience. The clergy of the various sections of the Christian Church stand too wide apart from each other simply because they do not know each other. And if the shepherds are thus sundered, it is no marvel that the sheep are divided! The Church of Christ is *essentially* one, why should she not be *visibly* one? Inseparable from Christ, why should we be separated from each other? With an essential unity of faith, why should we not all unite in excluding uncharitableness? O, if the Lord's people—losing sight of every badge but Christian, and of every name but Christ—were to mingle more frequently, confidingly, and prayerfully together, how much more would they find of assimilation, of sympathy, and affection—how much less to sunder, separate, and censure, and how much more to admire, love, and imitate in each other than they had any conception of. “I believe in the communion of saints”—would then be, not a cold, heartless, unbelieving acknowledgment of a creed—but the sincere, glowing avowal of a fact! Apply this to our intercourse with Jesus. It would be impossible for us to cultivate the habit of telling him every sin, every sorrow, every temptation, every trial, in a word, every incident of every hour of our daily history, and not increase in a knowledge of Christ. We should then “grow up into Christ in all things.” The flower absorbs the light, the heat, the air, the dew, and so unfolds its beauty, and breathes its fragrance. It is by a similar absorption of Christ into our souls that we grow, becoming vigorous, holy and fruitful. “He that dwelleth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing,” O, how endeared will Christ become, and God our Father in him, by this habit of going and telling Jesus everything. The more frequently we go to Jesus, the more intimately we shall know him; and the more intimately we know him, the more ardently shall we love, self-denyingly serve, and closely resemble him. O how close, confiding, and endearing will your intimacy become by this habit of going and telling him everything. How will his glory, loveliness, and excellence, unfold to your admiring eye. Day by day, and hour by hour each exigence of its history will reveal stronger reason wherefore you should admire, love, trust, and glorify Christ. Language cannot describe how growingly precious he will become to your soul; how more intensely your heart's affections will clasp and firmly entwine around him, your whole soul striving day by day to please and glorify him here, longing to be with him that you might see and enjoy him hereafter for ever.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

A HIGHLAND widow left her home early one morning, in order to reach, before evening, the residence of a kinsman who had promised to assist her to pay her rent. She carried on her back her only child, a boy two years old. The journey was a long one. (I was following the same wild and lonely path when I first heard the narrative I am about to relate.) The mountain track, after leaving the small village by the sea-shore where the widow lived, passes through a green valley, watered by a peaceful stream which flows into a neighbouring lake; it then winds along the margin of the solitary lake, until, near its farther end, it suddenly turns into an extensive copse-wood of oak and birch. From this it emerges half-way up a rugged mountain-side; and entering a dark glen, through which a torrent rushes amidst great masses of granite, it at last conducts the traveller, by a zig-zag ascent, to a narrow gorge, which is hemmed in upon every side by giant precipices; overhead is a strip of blue sky, while all below is dark and gloomy.

From this mountain-pass the widow's dwelling was ten miles off, and no human habitation was nearer than her own. She had undertaken a long journey indeed! But the rent was due some weeks before, and the sub-factor threatened to dispossess her, as the village in which she lived, and in which her family had lived for two generations, was about to be swept away, in order to enlarge a sheep farm. Indeed, along the margin of the quiet stream which watered the green valley, and along the shore of the lake, might even be traced the ruins of many a hamlet, where a happy and contented people once lived, but where no sound is now heard except the bleat of a solitary sheep, or the scream of the eagle, as he wheels his flight among the dizzy precipices.

The morning when the widow left her home gave promise of a lovely day. But, before noon, a sudden change took place in the weather. Northward, the sky became black and lowering. Masses of clouds rested upon the hills. Sudden gusts of wind began to whistle among the rocks, and to ruffle, with black squalls, the surface of the loch. The wind was succeeded by rain, and the rain by sleet, and sleet by a heavy fall of snow. It was the month of May—for that storm is remembered as the "great May storm." The wildest day of winter never beheld flakes of snow falling heavier or faster, whirling with more fury through the mountain-pass, filling every hollow, and whitening every rock!

Weary, and wet, and cold, the widow reached that pass with her child. She knew that a mile beyond it there was a mountain shielding which could give shelter; but the moment she attempted to face the storm of snow which was rushing through the gorge, all hope failed of proceeding in that direction. To return home was equally impossible. She must find shelter. The wild cat's or fox's den would be welcome.

After wandering for some time among the huge fragments of granite which skirted the base of the overhanging precipices, she at last found a more sheltered nook, she crouched beneath a projecting edge of rock, and pressed her child to her trembling bosom.

The storm continued to rage. The snow was accumulating overhead, Hour after hour passed. It became bitterly cold. The evening approached. The widow's heart was sick with fear and anxiety. Her child—her only child—was all she thought of. She wrapt him in her shawl. But the poor thing had been scantily clad, and the shawl was thin and worn. The widow was poor, and her clothing could hardly defend herself from the piercing cold of such a night as this. But whatever was to become of herself, her child must be preserved. The snow, in whirling eddies, entered the recess, which afforded them at best but miserable shelter.

The night came on. The wretched mother stripped off almost all her own clothing and wrapped it round her child, whom, at last, in despair, she put into a crevice of the rock, among some dried heather and fern.

And now she resolves, at all hazards, to brave the storm, and return home, in order to get assistance for her babe, or perish in the attempt! Claspings her infant to her heart, and covering his face with tears and kisses, she laid him softly down in sleep, and rushed into the snowy drift.

That night of storm was succeeded by a peaceful morning. The sun shone from a clear blue sky, and wreaths of mist hung along the mountain-tops, while a thousand waterfalls poured down their sides. Dark figures, made visible at a distance on the white ground, might be seen with long poles, examining every hollow near the mountain path. They are people from the village, who are searching for the widow and her son. They have reached the pass. A cry is heard by one of the shepherds, as he sees a bit of a tartan cloak among the snow. They have found the widow—dead; her arms stretched forth as if imploring for assistance? Before noon, they discovered her child by his cries. He was safe in the crevice of the rock. The story of that woman's affection

for her child was soon read in language which all understood. Her almost naked body revealed her love.

Many a tear was shed, many an exclamation expressive of admiration and affection was uttered, from enthusiastic sorrowing Highland hearts, when on that evening the aged pastor gathered the villagers in the deserted house of mourning, and by prayer and fatherly exhortation, sought to improve for their souls' good an event so sorrowful.

More than half a century passed away! That aged and faithful pastor was long dead, though his memory still lingers in many a retired glen among the children's children of parents whom he baptized. His son, whose locks were white with age, was preaching to a congregation of Highlanders in one of our great cities. It was on a communion Sabbath,

The subject of that discourse was the love of Christ. In illustrating the self-sacrificing nature of that "love which seeketh not her own," he narrated the above story of the Highland widow, whom he had himself known in his boyhood. And he asked, "If that child is now alive, what would you think of his heart if he did not cherish an affection for his mother's memory, and if the sight of her poor tattered cloak, which she had wrapt round him, in order to save his life at the cost of her own, did not fill him with gratitude and love too deep for words? Yet what hearts have you, my hearers, if, over these memorials of your Saviour's sacrifice of himself, you do not feel them glow with deeper love, and with adoring gratitude?"

A few days after this a message was sent by a dying man requesting to see this clergyman. The request was speedily complied with.

The sick man seized the minister by the hand, and, gazing intently in his face, said, "You do not, you cannot recognize me. But I know you, and knew your Father before you. I have been a wanderer in many lands. I have visited every quarter of the globe, I have fought and bled for my king and country. I came to this town a few weeks ago in bad health. Last Sabbath I entered your church—the church of my countrymen—where I could once more hear, in the language of my youth and of my heart, the Gospel preached. I heard you tell the story of the widow and her son"—here the voice of the old soldier faltered, his emotion almost checked his utterance; but recovering himself for a moment, he cried "*I am that son!*" and burst into a flood of tears. "Yes," he continued, "*I am that son!* Never, never, did I forget a mother's love. Well might you ask what a heart should mine have been if she had been forgotten by me? Though I never saw her, dear to me is her memory,

and my only desire now is, to lay my bones beside hers in the old churchyard among the hills. But, sir, what breaks my heart and covers me with shame, is this—until now I never saw, with the eyes of the soul, the love of my Saviour in giving himself for me—a poor, lost, hell-deserving sinner. I confess it! I confess it!" he cried, looking up to heaven, his eyes streaming with tears; and pressing the minister's hand close to his breast, he added, "It was God that made you tell that story. Praise be to his holy name, that my dear mother has not died in vain, and that the prayers which, I was told, she used to offer for me, have been at last answered; for the love of my mother has been blessed by the Holy Spirit for making me see, as I never saw before, the love of the Saviour. I see it, I believe it; I have found deliverance in old age where I found it in my childhood—in *the cleft of the rock*; but it is the *Rock of Ages*!" and clasping his hands, he repeated, with intense fervour, "Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? They may forget, yet will I not forget thee!"

WILL YOU BE SAVED?

You *need* salvation. You need nothing so much. No man ever needed health or friends, or help from man, so much as you need salvation. Without it you have before you an undone eternity. Your sins rise up like the mountains. Unless they be pardoned, they will like a mighty millstone sink you to an eternal hell. Unless they be subdued, they will torment and defile you for ever. Your natural ignorance of God, if it continue, will be as fatal as heathenism. Oh, you need salvation. You *must* be saved. Your soul is worth too much to allow it to be for ever lost. You cannot afford to be damned. Will you be saved?

You *may* be saved. God says so in many parts of his blessed Word. He also tells you how rich are the provisions of his grace. You have no want but can be supplied from the vast store-house of his mercy. Twenty-six times in one Psalm of as many verses, it is said, "His mercy endureth for ever." His Son has died. Heaven calls you. Others are entering. There yet is room. Will you be saved?

You must be saved *soon*, or not at all. The day of grace will not last for ever. God's Spirit will not always strive with man. There is but

one lifetime on earth given to any man, and that is very short. Life ended without an interest in Christ, eternity must be awful. This moment God waits to be gracious. Beware how you lightly esteem the most glorious offers ever made to sinners, even by God himself. *Oh, will you now be saved?*

If you are saved, it must be by *the blood and merits of Christ*. Stoddard, the grandfather of the elder President Edwards, wrote a book entitled, "The Safety of appearing at the Day of Judgment in the Righteousness of Christ." There is no safety for any sinner who attempts to go through the trials of the last day in any other righteousness. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified;" "The just shall live by faith;" "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth"—these are some of the forms in which God's word shuts us up to the faith of Christ. No blood, no merits, no advocacy, no priesthood, no sacrifice but Christ can avail. Will you be saved by Christ? Will you?

Nor can you be saved without *a new heart*. You must be born again. You must be converted. Your will and affections must be changed by the power and energy of the Holy Ghost. He can take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. He can destroy the love of sin within you, and write the love of God on your heart. He can purify your affections, and make you fit for the heavenly inheritance. He only can effect so great a change. Will you be saved by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Will you be saved? I hope you will. Many are praying that you may. God invites; mercy calls; hell threatens. Your case is urgent. No mortal can state any case more so. If you die in your sins, you will mourn at the last, when your flesh and your body are consumed, and say, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me." *Oh, will you be saved?*

Richard Cecil says, *Hell is the truth seen too late*. Will you not see the truth in time to be saved by it? Open your eyes. *Oh, think; Oh, consider*. If you die without the salvation of the Gospel of Christ, you die "*without mercy*." Why pull down ruin on your poor perishing soul! I ask again—it may be the last time any mortal will ever ask—WILL YOU BE SAVED?—*Dr. Plumer*.

THE WORK OF GOD IN FAMILIES.

IN the progress of religion in the world, it may reasonably be expected that the power of God will be especially manifested in families. Each household, linked together by peculiar and strong ties, will constitute practically a church of God. The holy man, at the head of his family, stands forth in a special sense the representative of his heavenly Father. Such is the peculiar nature and importance of his position, that he speaks, if he is a man of true religion, with an authority which belongs to no other. He is a priest—not, indeed, by the forms of earthly ordination—but still a priest, like Christ himself, by the inspiration of God, and “after the order of Melchisedek.” It is from him and through him, if he sets a good example, and fulfils his office of a teacher or priest of his household, that the child obtains, more distinctly than in any other way, his first ideas of our Father in heaven. And then add to the example and influence of the father, that of the mother (for the father is not the completed or perfect man without the mother),—an influence so gentle, so constant, so effective—and it will be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the family constitution, considered in its relation to human virtue and happiness.

Within a few days, and since commencing the writing of these remarks, an incident has come to my knowledge, which illustrates the subject. A young man, not far distant, having arrived at an age when it seemed to be proper for him to do so, left his father’s house to engage in some business in another place. He was soon exposed to unforeseen temptations, and fell into great sin. He not only sinned, but became hardened and desperate in sin. His friends followed him, reasoned with him, entreated him, but all in vain. The victory of the great adversary, who had entangled him in his toils, seemed to be complete. They then made one request—that fixed and desperate as he was in his vicious course, he would so far yield to the common claims of humanity as to visit once more his father’s house, and permit his aged parents to look upon him before they died. It was with great reluctance that he consented. As he came back, the home of his youth rose before him. The fields where he had wandered in the delightful days of childhood expanded in his sight—beautiful in themselves, but, alas, how changed to him, who had lost the mirror of beauty in his own darkened heart! All received him with those unaffected tokens of benevolent interest, which are the natural

language of love. There were no reproofs, no remonstrances. They understood that he came back professedly a sinner—and a sinner by choice. And having already exhausted their efforts for his recovery, they had no courage to do or say anything more.

Accordingly, the day of his return passed away without any visible sign of penitence and returning union. And yet he was a son and a brother. The bright sun went down over the hills; and the various members of the family, resting from their labours, shared in each other's society. At the usual hour in the evening, they gathered around the domestic hearth, as had ever been their custom, that they might pray together, and mingle their hearts in penitence and faith, in the presence of their Maker, before they slept. The father read the Bible, and prayed; and they sang their evening hymn. This affecting scene, that Bible which had warned and instructed his childhood, a parent's supplication, that sacred song in which brothers and sisters joined, the presence of so many beloved objects, the peace and purity of the dear and sacred heaven of home, presented in contrast with the wretchedness and sin of the scenes to which he had recently been accustomed, broke the barrier of his rebellious spirit; the tears of true penitence and love fell from his eyes; and he was rendered doubly happy by being restored, at the same time to the centre of affections in God, and the centre of affections on earth.

There are institutions at the present day, in which the Bible is carefully studied; but less with a reference to moral than intellectual culture. The study of the Bible for the mere purpose of increasing our amount of knowledge is not all that is needed.

It should be studied with a view to the supply of our moral and religious wants. There should, therefore, be a distinct recognition, in every institution of learning, of man's alienation from God, and of the necessity of his restoration. Upon these two great subjects, which are vital in every true system of mental culture, all possible light should be thrown. And it ought to be understood that no person is to be regarded as thoroughly educated who cannot say that he has given his heart to God at the same time that he has given his intellect to the pursuit of the truth.

Nor are such views to be considered as impracticable. There are principles, perhaps, not yet fully ascertained, which will result (we will not say infallibly, but certainly as a general thing), in spiritual renovation. And it seems to be a part of God's plan that they shall be applied

in connection with the relationship of man with man, and their mutual agency one upon the other. In all institutions, therefore, there should be living teachers, men "full of the Holy Ghost," who should be able to explain and apply the principles which are found in the Bible. If such institutions could take the place of many which now exist, the favourable results to morals and religion would be immense.

In early life I had the privilege of being associated, for a short time, in an institution, where it seemed to me that some of these views were happily illustrated. The studies always opened in the morning and closed at night with religious services. The first half hour of every morning, in particular, was devoted to the reading of the Scriptures, the explanatory and practical remarks of the worthy and learned instructor, and to prayer. And it was understood by all, whatever might be the state of their own minds, that this religious exercise was regarded by the teacher as one of pre-eminent importance. When he came before his pupils on this occasion, they did not doubt that he had first commended them to God in private; and that of all objects which he desired and had at heart, there was none so dear to him as their soul's salvation. Every movement was stilled; every voice hushed; every eye fixed. And whatever might be their creed or want of creed, their religious adhesions or aversions, such was their sympathy with his obvious sense of responsibility and his sincerity, that even the hearts of the infidel and the profane were cheerfully laid open before him; so that with their own consent, he was enabled, by means of his own prayers and warnings, to write upon them, as it were, inscriptions for immortality. I was not a pupil in the seminary to which I refer, but an assistant teacher; and had a good opportunity to observe and judge. My own heart never failed to be profoundly affected? and, from what I have learned and known of his pupils since, scattered as they have been in all parts of the world, and engaged in various occupations, I have no doubt that God eminently blessed the faithful labours of this good man, and that he was permitted to realise in his instructions, and to an extent not often witnessed, the beautiful union of the culture of the heart with that of the understanding.—*A Treatise on Divine Union. By Dr. C. Upham, U.S.*

PRAYER.—Prayer is the key of the day, and lock of the night. And we should every day begin and end, bid ourselves good-morrow, and good night, with prayer. This will make our labour prosperous, and our rest sweet.—*Lord Berkeley.*

WHY CHRIST EXPECTS HIS DISCIPLES TO DO MORE THAN OTHERS.

1. Because they *profess* more than others. They *profess* to have consecrated themselves to the Lord, to be employed in his service; to have experienced the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost: to love God with all their heart, and their neighbours as themselves; to be governed in all their conduct, by a regard to God's glory; to have their treasure and hearts in heaven; to delight in religious duties; to desire the salvation of sinners; and not to be ashamed of Christ or his cause. Others, unless they are base hypocrites, do not profess these things. As Christians thus *profess* more than others, Christ has a right to expect that they will *do* more than others.

2. They have *promised* more than others. They have promised to forsake all sin—to deny themselves all ungodliness and worldly lusts; to pray without ceasing; to set a pious example before the world; to recommend religion to all men; and to perform all those duties by which God may be glorified, and the religion of the Bible extended and established among men. The world has made no such promises. But as Christians have *promised*, it is expected that they will perform.

3. They have *received* more than others. They have received special, effectual, converting grace. They have received a new heart, the pardon of their sins, justification by faith in Christ, adoption and the spirit of adoption, and partial sanctification. As they have *received* blessings greater and more valuable than others, Christ expects them to *do* more than others.

4. They *enjoy* more than others. They enjoy what others do not, communion with God and communion with the saints; delight in divine worship and ordinances; the business of doing good in the Lord's vineyard—labouring to convert sinners and to send the gospel through the world; peace of conscience and fellowship with the Holy Ghost; and, finally, the contemplation of that glorious rest which remains for God's people in the future world. As they *enjoy* more than others, they may be expected to *do* more than others.

5. They will have to *answer* for more than others. Where much is given, much will be required. As Christians have received more than others, they are under stronger obligations of love and obedience than

others, and, of course, must be accountable for more than others. Hence it is expected that they will *do* more than others.

6. They have good grounds to *hope* for more than others in the coming world. Christians can confidently say, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "We know that when he (Christ) shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, as he is pure." Christians have a well grounded hope that they shall be admitted into God's presence, where "is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore;" that they shall see their Divine Lord and Master, and be with him in his kingdom and glory for ever; that they shall be delivered from all sin and sorrow, and pain and tears, and be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity; that they shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the redeemed of the Lord, from every nation and people under heaven, and go no more out for ever; that they shall mingle with the holy angels, and join the general assembly and church of the first-born in the New Jerusalem, where every desire of their soul will be gratified,

"And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy."

If Christians may reasonably hope for such things (which none others have a right to hope for), then surely they *ought to do* more than others, and Christ has a right to expect it of them.

LIFE.

THE mere lapse of years is not life. To eat, drink, and sleep; to be exposed to darkness and light; to pace around the mill of habits and turn the mill of wealth; to make reason our bookkeeper, and thought an implement of trade—this is not life. In all this but a poor fraction of the unconsciousness of humanity is awakened; and the sanctities still slumber which make it worth while to be. Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone can give vitality to the mechanism of existence; the laugh of mirth which vibrates through the heart, the tear which freshens the dry wastes within, the music that brings childhood back, the prayer that calls the future near, the death which startles us with mystery, the hardship which forces us to struggle, the anxiety that ends in being.—*Chalmers*.

THE DISCIPLINE OF DAILY LIFE.

THE reason why we have so many crosses, trials, wrongs, and pains, is evident. We have not one too many for the successful culture of our faith. The great thing, and that which it is most of all difficult to produce in us, is a participation of Christ's forgiving gentleness and patience. This, if we can learn it, is the most difficult and the most distinctively Christian of all attainments. Therefore we need a continual discipline of occasions; poverty, sickness, bereavements, losses, treacheries, misrepresentations, oppressions, persecutions; we can hardly have too many for our own good, if only we receive them as the Saviour did his cross. It is by just these refining fires of trial and suffering, that we are to be most advanced in that to which we aspire.

We have not too many occasions given us for the exercise of patience; which is yet more evident when we consider the Christian power of patience. How many are there who, by reason of poverty, obscurity, infirmity of mind or body, can never hope to do much by action, and who often sigh at the contemplation of their want of power to effect anything! But it is given to them, as to all, to suffer; let them only suffer well, and they will give a testimony for God, which all who know them will deeply feel and profoundly respect. It is not necessary for all men to be great in action. The greatest and sublimest power is often simple patience; and for just that reason we need sometimes to see its greatness alone, that we may embrace the solitary, single idea of such greatness, and bring it into our hearts unconfused with all other kinds of power. Whoever gives to the church of God such a contribution—the invalid, the cripple, the neglected and forlorn woman—every such person yields a testimony for the cross, that is second in value to no other.

Let this be remembered, and let it be your joy, in every trial, and grief, and pain, and wrong you suffer, that to suffer well is to be a true advocate, and apostle, and pillar of faith.

“They also serve who only stand and wait.”

And here, let me add, is pre-eminently the office and power of woman. Her power is to be the power of gentleness and patient endurance. An office so divine, let her joyfully accept and faithfully bear—adding sweetness to life in all its exasperating and bitter experiences, causing poverty to smile, cheering the hard lot of adversity, teaching pain the way of

peace, abating hostilities, and disarming injuries by the patience of her love. All the manifold conditions of human suffering and sorrow are many occasions given to woman, to prove the sublimity of true submission, and reveal the celestial power of passive godliness.

Have you never observed the immense power exerted by many Christian men and women, whose lives are passed in comparative silence? You know not how it is,—they seem to be really doing little, and yet they are felt by thousands. And the secret of this wonder is, that they know how to suffer well—they are in the patience of Jesus. They will not resent evil, nor think evil. They are not easily provoked. They are content with their lot, though it be a lot of poverty and affliction. They will not be envious of others. When they are wronged, they remember Christ, and forgive—when oppressed and thwarted, they endure and wait.

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.

ONE of the most terror speaking texts in the Bible. It is not a warning, for it is accompanied by no words of encouragement such as might be admonished. It is not addressed to those of whom there was any hope that they would cease from their evil ways, and make peace with God. It is simply a challenge to desperately hardened sinners to try their strength with him. We may compare it with the prophet's to Amaziah, when having bidden him dismiss his hired allies in his war with Edom, he adds, "*But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle; God shall make thee fall before the enemy.*"

Sinner, say we not truly that language like this has a fearful meaning, when addressed by Jehovah to one of his creatures? If thou art determined in thy enmity, accept his challenge.

There must be an encounter soon. He will require thy soul or thee. Prepare to meet him. Build the tower that he cannot storm, invest thyself in the armour that his weapons cannot pierce.

Or, failing that, prepare to contend with him in judgment at the Grand Assize. Make ready the pleadings that silence him before the universe of rational creatures, or discipline the forces that shall overawe him at that day. If thou hast a mind to meet him with force, it behoves thee to prepare.

Sinner, prepare for the everlasting burnings kindled by his wrath in the world of woe. When he sends for thy soul, the word will be with power. His hand grasps the thunderbolts; his quiver is full of arrows.

O, sinner, learn this lesson betimes. God is a consuming fire. Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered? Thy heart cannot endure, neither can thine hands be strong in the day when he shall deal with thee. Let thy stubborn will yield. Fly to Christ. Reply to the challenge of the prophet that Jesus is your champion, that he has subdued your iniquities, and that the war between you and your God is for ever at an end.

Happy is the man who is prepared to meet God, not in hopeless conflict, but as the son, long a wanderer, meets the eager father at the threshold of his home!

HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS.

WHAT God has joined together, let us never put asunder: a holy life here, and a heavenly one hereafter. We must now "walk with God," if we would live with him for ever. Through the kingdom of grace and holiness only, can we come to the kingdom of glory.—*Leifchild*.

HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

A YEAR, another year has fled;
 Its issues who can tell?
 Millions of voices of the dead
 Reply from heaven or hell.
 All these were living at the birth
 Of the departed year;
 They all have vanish'd from the earth;
 We fill their places here.
 Though to the eye, the ear, the mind
 Of man, their speech is seal'd,
 The eternal meaning each may find
 In two plain words reveal'd.
 Lost spirits, from the dark abyss,
 Cry mournfully, "Beware!"
 Spirits in glory and in bliss
 Sing joyfully, "Prepare!"
 Thus timely warn'd, and moved with fear
 Of wrath, let us beware;
 For life or death, in this NEW YEAR,
 For earth and heaven prepare!
 Who then of those with us, this day,
 In childhood, youth, or age,
 "To love the Lord our God" (can say)
 We all our hearts engage!"

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT, DECEMBER 12, 1858,
BY THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF RIPON,
IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16.

THIS is one of those very wonderful texts of Scripture which convey in a single sentence a comprehensive view of the whole scheme of redemption. It is a marvellous thing that a scheme which was planned in the councils of eternity, upon which the treasures of infinite wisdom, love, and power were expended, which has occupied thousands of years to develope, and will employ the anthems of eternity to celebrate, should be capable of being described within the narrow compass of a single verse, so plain that all may comprehend, and so brief that all may recollect it. And yet, my brethren, in this simple verse there is truth enough contained to acquit or to condemn every human being to whom this verse is proclaimed. Upon the reception given to the truth contained in this verse depends the everlasting salvation or condemnation of every human being ; and had there been no other verse contained in the Bible but this—had this been the solitary verse of which the whole volume of revelation had been made to consist, there would have been enough in that verse to justify the declaration, that the volume of inspiration is "able to make men wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." And therefore it is that I never approach the consideration of this text without feeling what solemnity and awe belong to the consideration of it. It is like that cloud of old, which guided the children of Israel in their marchings through the desert. It has a double aspect—an aspect of brightness and comfort to the people of God, but an aspect of

Mother's Magazine, January, 1859.

terror and dismay to those by whom the truth of God is rejected. Let us, my brethren, this night endeavour to approach the consideration of this verse with a single desire by the teaching of God's Holy Spirit to arrive at a right understanding of the truth which it contains; and may God give us both the wisdom and the grace to accept that truth to our soul's salvation!

Now, if you look attentively at this verse you will find that it speaks to us of the origin of our redemption, of the plan of our redemption, of the extent of it, of the mode of application of it, and of the results which follow from it; and to each of these points I purpose, in dependence on the teaching of God's Holy Spirit, briefly to direct your attention.

I. And first of all, here is the origin of our redemption, simply set forth to us by the expression, "God so loved the world." The origin of our redemption, then, was Divine. Redemption did not originate from a movement on the part of man towards God, but in a movement on the part of God towards man. It as much required divinity to redeem, as it required divinity to create the world. No power short of the Divine could have redeemed a fallen ruined world. But we are not left simply to the conclusion that redemption as to its origin was Divine—we are further told what was that particular attribute of the Divine Being from which our redemption originated. That attribute was love—the unfathomable, the inexplicable, the inexhaustible love of God. Nothing else will explain our redemption. It can be resolved, as to its origin, into nothing else but the inscrutable and ineffable love of God. There was no necessity that man should have been redeemed; there was no claim upon man's part to redemption. God himself, we may say with reverence, had nothing to lose by man's perdition, and nothing to gain by man's salvation. Very true it is, that redemption has served the most gloriously to illustrate the perfections of the Divine Being; but then it cannot truly be said that redemption has made God more glorious than he was before, or than he ever would have been even, had man not been redeemed. The sun which shines upon some bright surface may be brightly reflected from it, and that reflecting surface may serve to illustrate the radiance of the sun; but the sun is not made more bright than it was before, by reason of the brightness of the surface from which it may be reflected. And redemption is a reflecting surface which throws back to the beholder all the attributes of the Divine Being; but those attributes are not made the more perfect or the more glorious than they were before, by reason of the redemption which has served to illustrate them; and therefore it is that redemption is to be resolved, as to its cause, simply into the love of God. It was so in the original procurement of redemption, and it is so also in the application of it. If we have been brought to love God, it is because God first loved us. The fountain of Divine love is the source from whence proceeds all blessing to mankind.

II. But again, the text not only tells us of the origin of redemption, but it tells us, secondly, also of the plan of redemption ; and the plan of redemption is described to us in these remarkable terms—" God gave his only begotten Son ;" not that the Son did not freely give himself, but that the first motion, if we may so speak, towards redemption was, that God the Father freely gave up his only begotten Son, surrendered him to do and to suffer all that was necessary to be done and suffered, in order that fallen man might be redeemed. And do you ask how God gave up his only begotten Son ? I reply, God gave his only begotten Son in the councils of eternity. When the plan of our redemption was first devised, when in the eternal foreknowledge and purpose of God the Son of God was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, then God gave up his only begotten Son. He gave up his only begotten Son when he gave that promise to our first parents in Eden—the promise which spoke of a deliverer who was to bruise the head of the serpent, and through whom a redemption was to be effected. He may be said to have given up his Son in the institutions of sacrifice. All the sacrifices under the patriarchal and the legal dispensation were intended to prefigure or to adumbrate the sacrifice of Christ, the propitiation which he offered of himself once for all, when he died for our sins upon Calvary. God gave his only begotten Son also in all the varied types and ceremonies of the Levitical dispensation. He gave him in the ministry of prophets—" holy men of old," who " spake as they were moved " by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, and all whose testimony was of Christ. He gave his Son also at the time of the incarnation, when he who had been " God over all blessed for ever," co-eternal and co-equal with the Father, possessed of all the attributes and wielding all the prerogatives of Divinity, condescended to become a man such as we are, sin only excepted, " bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," that he might stand in our stead, obey the law of God for us, and endure the penalties which our infraction of that law had rightfully deserved. And God gave his only begotten Son, when he spared him not from the shame and the suffering, the ignominy and the anguish of the cross. Then, when he who had been co-eternal and co-equal with the Father, having now assumed the created nature, went up the altar of Calvary, and there " poured out his soul an offering for sin"—then God may be said to have given his only begotten Son. And is this all ? Nay, he gave him by the ministry of the apostles ; and he gives him still in the ministrations of his church. He gives him to you, my brethren, now, at this time. Christ is now held forth to every one of you as your Saviour, " able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him ;" and wheresoever ministers stand up as the ambassadors for Christ, to tell of the freeness of his love and the power of his grace, God may be said to be giving his only begotten Son—as it were, repeating the gift, or holding it forth to men, and pressing that gift on their acceptance.

III. Now I come to speak, thirdly, of the extent of our redemption. That extent is set before us in the expression that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish." It was not for a mere fragment of the human race that the Son of God condescended to suffer, to bleed, and to die; it was not for the Jew merely that God gave his only begotten Son; it was neither for the Jew only, nor for the Gentile only, but it was for both Jew and Gentile; it was for the whole world. The whole world was the object of God's love, and a redemption was provided co-extensive with the need of all mankind. You know that this truth is frequently set before us in God's word. For example, we are told, "All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." Christ is spoken of as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." We are told that he "tasted death for every man," that he is "the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world." Hence it results, that when Christ died upon the cross he made "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world," in virtue of which every human being has been included within the range of the atonement, and may be invited to look to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith of his ability and willingness to save him from everlasting condemnation. This is a very glorious truth that we can stand and proclaim in the midst of a fallen world, that there is a redemption provided commensurate with the necessities of all mankind—that we can address all, without exception, and tell every human being who comes within the range of our voice, there is a redemption for you; means have been provided by which your sin may be washed away, your person accepted, your salvation secured; Christ has died for you; Christ has shed his precious blood on your behalf; Christ has obeyed the law in your stead, and his own gracious declaration is, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

But now, my Christian brethren, let me guard against a misapprehension which might arise out of this statement with regard to the extent of redemption; for there are those who confound redemption with salvation, and who seem to argue that because all men have been redeemed, therefore all men will necessarily be saved. Universal redemption I believe to be a scriptural doctrine; universal salvation I believe to be the devil's lie, constructed on the basis of God's eternal truth. It does not necessarily follow that because a man is redeemed, therefore he will be saved. His redemption makes his salvation possible. Redemption is a necessary condition of salvation; but

salvation is not a necessary consequence upon redemption. Men may reject the proffered salvation ; men may refuse to lay hold of the remedy graciously provided in the gospel ; men may, as the Apostle Peter declares, “ deny the Lord that bought” or redeemed them, and so “ bring upon themselves swift destruction ;” and therefore, though we hear of a redemption so full and so plenteous, though we may be reminded, according to the truth of God’s own word, that there is no sin which the blood of Christ cannot wash away, and no sinner so estranged from God that he may not be invited to return as a penitent prodigal to the home of a father that loves him still, yet never can we be too frequently reminded, that after all, though redeemed, we shall not be saved, unless we come in faith to that Saviour who has redeemed us, and exhibit that faith by a life of willing obedience to his service.

IV. And this brings me to the fourth point, namely, the application of redemption, upon which the words of the text plainly declare, that the method of application is simply faith. “ God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Now, when we hear of the glorious sufficiency of redemption, when we hear that the Son of God, through his incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession at the right hand of God, has made it possible for all men to be saved, the natural question that arises in the mind of one who hears such a statement as this will be, ‘ How may I come to partake of this glorious remedy ? How may I share in the provisions of redemption ? How may I come to inherit that which Christ has so richly provided ?’ The answer to this question is, “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” The answer is—Look in faith, simple, unquestioning faith, to him who was crucified, but now liveth for ever and for evermore ; and your faith shall be the instrument of your salvation ; your faith shall plant you on the rock of ages, and land you securely in eternal bliss. You know that the word of God is very plain and explicit upon this point. For example, in the first chapter of this same Gospel we read, “ Christ came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power”—that is, to them gave he the right or title—“ to be the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Again, in this third chapter from which the text is taken we read—“ He that believeth on him is not condemned ; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” And once again, in the 36th verse—“ He that believeth

on the Son hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Nothing can be more clear or explicit than those statements—that the method of the application of redemption is simply faith—believing in the Son of God—and that this faith gives to the believer a personal interest in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that the fruit of his obedience, and the benefit of his atonement, and all the value of his intercession, become the possession of the man who believes in Christ. The natural reason cannot receive this statement ; it rather rebels against it. It cannot discern how it should be that so simple an operation as that of faith should lead to so transcendent a result. No more could the children of Israel of old understand with their natural reason how it was that, when they were bitten by the serpent whose bite was fatal, and were labouring under that fatal malady, if they looked to the serpent of brass uplifted on a pole by the commandment of God, the very act of looking to that uplifted serpent of brass should issue in their recovery from the fatal wound. And yet so it came to pass. Those who did in obedience to the Divine command look to that uplifted serpent of brass lived, whilst those who refused to do so perished in their unbelief. So it is still. Faith to the soul is precisely what vision is to the natural body ; and the man who exercises faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may be described as looking to Christ, and in looking to Christ will be as surely saved from the fatal wound of sin as the Israelite of old who looked to the serpent of brass was in so doing delivered from the fatal bite under which he had laboured.

But what is this faith of which we speak, which becomes to its possessor a passport to so glorious a result ? Is it very important that we should clearly understand what this faith really means. My brethren, it is not a mere consent of the mind, and not a mere tacit verdict of the intellect. There are many truths—truths of history, for example, truths of science, truths relating to other matters of daily occurrence or observation—which are presented to the mind, and to which the mind readily assents ; and when the mind does so assent, it may be said to believe those truths. But that is not the kind of faith of which the Scriptures speak, when exalting the worth of faith to every true believer. That is an operation in which the mind only is concerned ; whereas the faith which is here spoken of, the faith which gives to its possessor a personal interest in the work of Christ, is an act, so to speak, of the whole man—his judgment, his reason, his will, his affections, all being brought into harmony with the mind and the will of God. It is a heaven-born principle ; God alone can impart it. It is the gift of God. It has a wonderful

property; it transmutes its possessor into the image of Christ; it transforms the whole man; it purifies the heart; it "works by love." It brings all the sanctions of eternity to bear upon the employments of time; it opens the ear of the soul to hearken to the melodies of eternity, and it inspires its possessor with a predominant aim to live to the glory of God, and to consecrate every faculty to the service of him who has bought us with his blood. That is the faith to which allusion is made in the text, where, with regard to the mode of application of redemption, it is said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

V. And now I come to notice, lastly, the results of redemption, as set before us in the text. My brethren, here there is an aspect of darkness, as well as an aspect of brightness and comfort. Everlasting life is put into contrast with everlasting death; "everlasting life," with all that the term can be supposed to imply—deliverance from sin, emancipation from its thralldom, freedom from its guilt and its power, the investiture with the righteousness of Christ, perfected sanctification, the glorified soul, the glorified body also, made to be the imperishable home of the immortal spirit; likeness to Jesus, companionship with angels and with archangels, with cherubim and with seraphim, and with all the saints of God, redeemed to God from amongst men—admission into heaven itself, into the upper sanctuary, standing before the throne of God, arrayed in white raiment, wearing the palm branch of victory, crowned with a crown of immortal glory—all this involved in the expression "everlasting life," and all this the result of that simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which unites the weakest believer to Jesus, as his Surety, his Saviour, his Advocate, his High Priest, his Mediator, his Intercessor—all this the result of simply believing in his name! And what stands in contrast with this? The term here used is "perish." But that term does not mean annihilation; it does not mean the being swept into nothingness; but it means what is elsewhere expressed in Scripture as the "outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." It means what Scripture elsewhere describes as the worm that cannot die, the fire that cannot be quenched.

And now, my Christian brethren, let me practically apply this text, and ask each of you to whom I am now speaking, what reception are you giving to the truth contained in this announcement? Again, let me repeat in your hearing a truth which, as I said at the outset, contains in itself sufficient to acquit or condemn every being to whom it is proclaimed. "God so loved the world,

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "That whosoever believeth." Have you believed? Have you come to this Saviour? Have you ever seriously asked yourself the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Have you ever begun to be really in earnest about your soul's salvation? Oh! alas! alas! how many thousands there are who can be in earnest about everything else, sooner than in earnest about their soul's salvation! They can be in earnest to get power, in earnest to get wealth, in earnest to get distinction, in earnest to get reputation, in earnest to surround themselves with the luxuries or the pleasures of this life; but alas! how few comparatively are in earnest that their souls may be saved! God grant that if there be one soul here to-night who has never yet been in earnest to be saved, from this very time he might begin to ask, with all the depth of seriousness and anxious concern, "What must I do to be saved?" And if you ask that question, with all seriousness and anxiety, my answer to you is, The way is simple, the way is plain—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." But say not that you believe, without you exhibit the fruits of faith. If your faith is genuine it will make you active; it will make you give all diligence to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling"—to "give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." May we, one and all of us, be stirred up by themes so full of comfort as these, and yet themes which so tell of our momentous responsibility! may we be stirred up henceforth to live the life of faith in the Son of God, that "when Christ who is our life shall appear, we may then also appear with him in glory."

Sketches and Essays.

TO MOTHERS.

A MOTHER sat in tears by the bed-side of her youngest-born and best beloved. Six days had passed since the hand of fever was laid upon him, and, ever since, the life-fountains had been drying up under the fervent heat. Many times daily had she entered into her closet and bowed herself daily before the Father of mercies, praying that the Destroyer might pass by her dwelling. But prayers and tears availed not. Steadily the disease kept on its fatal course, and now scarcely a hope remained. Friends gathered around, offering words of consolation, but they were only as idle murmurs in her ears.

"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away—Blessed be the name of the Lord," said the good pastor, who, only a-year before, had lifted the sweet boy in his arms, and, in the presence of angels, touched his pure forehead with the waters of baptism.

But the mother made no sign. She could not accept this affliction as a blessing—she could not offer up thanks. Her very life was bound up in the life of her child, and the thought of separation was so terrible, that no place for consolation was left in her grieving spirit.

"It is appointed unto man once to die," added the minister, still seeking to penetrate the mother's heart, and pour in oil and wine; "we must all pass by this way—must all enter this valley—must all go down into the dark river. How much better, then, to die in the morning of life, ere fierce sunbeams have drank the fragrant dews, or the green leaves have withered on the sapless branches."

Still the mother gave no sign.

"You will have a treasure in heaven; and where the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

But all availed not. The tears fell like rain.

Sadly, at length, the minister turned away, and left the weeping mother with her friends; for her ears were closed to all the words of consolation he could offer.

An hour later, and the mother still bent over the frail body of her

little one. There was no hope in her heart, for she saw upon his wan face the signet-mark of the death-angel. One friend remained with her; and, until now, this friend had offered no words of comfort. The grieving mother was bending over the pillow upon which the sick child lay, and gazing down upon the countenance she was soon to see no more, when she felt a hand laid gently upon her own, and with a touch that sent a new impulse throbbing through the heart.

"It is very dark here, sometimes," said the friend, very softly, very tenderly, and with a meaning in her voice beyond that contained in the words she had uttered.

The mother answered only by a returning pressure of the hand.

"Even the light of this world is darkness when compared with the light of heaven. Here the best and most highly favoured do little more than grope their way. There, every one walks in noon-day clearness."

She had gained the mother's ear. Her words had gone inward to the region of thought.

"I have passed through these deep waters, my friend," she continued, "and have heard their terrible roaring. I have held a dying babe in my arms, and clung to it with an agony of grief that seemed as if it would snap my very heart-strings. But, after the keenness of affliction was over, I had this consolation, and it has remained ever since. When the night with *me* was at the darkest, it was morning with *my child*. Yes, it was then that the morning broke on him which shall never go down in night. Blessed morning of celestial glory! Oh, how often and often since, when I have walked in darkness, have I thanked God, with a true heart, fervently, that it was morning with my child!"

The mother's tears ceased to fall, and she turned her wet eyes upon her friend, and looked into her face earnestly.

"There is one question," said her friend, after a pause, "that every mother should ask herself. It is this—'How do I love my child—selfishly or unselfishly?' If unselfishly, then, whatever is best for the child, will give to her heart the deepest pleasure. I had a dream on the very night my precious one was taken away from me. I believe that it was imaged to my fancy while sleeping, by a loving angel sent to comfort me in my great affliction. There had always been something very fearful in me in the idea of dying here, and awakening to consciousness in a new and strangely different existence; and the thought followed my child. That dream was to me a revelation, and as such I accepted it thankfully. I saw, in my sleep, two scenes—the one contrasting with

the other, as we sometimes see them in two pictures. One scene represented the saddest of my life experiences. I saw myself sitting in darkness and in tears, as you sit now, my friend and sister, bending over my precious babe, clinging to it as the miser clings to his gold—aye, and with an intenser passion. But only a veil dropped down between that scene and another, which quickly enchained my vision, and caused my heart, heavy with grief, to throb with a new-born pleasure. An angel, in form like a chaste young virgin, was clasping to her bosom a babe, in all the ecstasy of a new-born joy. No mother, when she feels upon her breast the first pressure of her first babe, ever felt more delight than I saw pictured in the face of the angel as she held *my* babe to her loving heart. Yes, *my* babe, just born into heaven, and given into her care by the Divine Father of us all.

“For a time I could not withdraw my eyes from the face of the angel. Never had I gazed upon a countenance so full of love; so radiant with celestial beauty. And the babe nestled on her bosom as lovingly as it had ever nestled on mine. From this scene, after gazing upon it until tears ran down my cheeks—tears of gratitude that it was so well with my babe—I turned to look at the darker one—at the sorrowing earthly mother and the suffering child! Poor babe! Wasted with sickness and writhing with mortal pain. How yearningly and pityingly my heart went towards it, and I prayed for its deliverance! Even as the words went up from my heart, the darker scene faded until it became no longer visible; but the brighter one remained. When I awoke, and grief for my great loss revived in my heart, I recalled the precious dream, and took comfort. What if I did walk in darkness? It was morning—eternal morning with my child!”

As the mother listened, to her mind was also pictured the two scenes. Her tears had ceased to flow, and her countenance showed a visible interest. A little while she sat musing, and then, as she turned her eyes full of tenderness, upon her sick boy, said:

“Oh, it is hard, very hard, to give him up! How can I do it? How can I resign him, even to the care of an angel?”

The friend said no more. Her words had found a way into the heart of the sorrowing one, and she left them to do their own work.

A little later, and the hour of deepest darkness came—the hour of separation. Over the mother’s spirit a pall of blackest gloom was spread. The words of her friend had faded from her memory. She saw not the beautiful beyond, but gazed only upon a dark gloomy abyss, into which

her precious one was about falling, while she stood helpless by. Oh, what would she not then have given for light upon the future ! for an unsealed vision. Willingly would she have died, that she might go with her child along the unknown way, and shield him from its terrors. Over him she bent, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, caring for nothing, but her boy ; while darker and closer the shadows gathered around her. It was night—dark, cold, moonless night, with the grieving mother.

For more than an hour the child had lain in a deep stupor ; but it was evident that life was ebbing away, and that the last agony would soon be over. For herself, the mother had almost ceased to grieve : every thought and every feeling were centered in her child, about passing alone through the gate of death—alone to meet the realities of the unseen world.

Suddenly a light fell upon the wan, suffering face—a smile played around the white lips—the eyes long closed, and heavy with pain and fever, flew open, and, glancing upwards with a glad expression, the child said—

“ Good morning, mamma ! ”

“ Good morning love ! ” answered the startled mother, scarcely thinking of the words she uttered.

“ Good morning ! ” repeated the child, still gazing upwards, with a new and heavenly beauty in its countenance. “ Oh, it is morning now ! ”

Fixed was the glad look for several moments ; then the fringing lids drooped slowly, until they lay softly upon the pure white cheeks. The parted lips closed ; but the smile remained. The hands, lifted for a moment in glad surprise, fell over the placid breast, and all was still, and holy, and beautiful.

“ Yes, it is morning now, ” whispered the friend in the mother’s ear, as she sat like one entranced, gazing upon the pulseless form before her, which, as if touched by an enchanter’s wand, had suddenly changed from an image of suffering into one of tranquil beauty.

And it *was* morning with the child—a heavenly morning—and morning also with the mother ; for a new light had dawned upon her, and a new faith in the hereafter. The dark valley was suddenly bridged with light, and she saw her precious one by angel guides safely led over.

“ God careth for these jewels, ” said the friend, a few hours afterwards. “ They are precious in his sight : and not one of them is lost. His love is tenderer even than a mother’s love. We may trust them in his hands with unfaltering confidence. Yes, yes, grieving mother ! it is indeed morning with your babe ! ”—*Steps towards Heaven.*

THE FIRST STEP TO A REVIVAL.*

"Enter into thy closet."—Matt. vi. 6.

I.—ENTER, AND SEARCH YOUR OWN HEART.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways."—Haggai i. 7.

"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."—Lam. iii. 40.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart : try me, and know my thoughts."—
Psalm cxxxix. 23.

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."—1 Cor. xi. 31.

"Let every man prove his own work."—Galatians vi. 4.

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works."—Revelations ii. 5.

"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies."—Ps. cxix. 59

II.—ENTER, AND STUDY GOD'S WORD.

"Search the Scriptures."—John v. 39.

"Blessed is the man . . . whose delight is in the law of the Lord."—Ps. i. 1—2

"Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read."—Isaiah xxxiv. 16.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."—Col. iii. 16.

"Receive with meekness the engrafted word."—James i. 21.

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart."—Psalm cxix. 11.

III.—ENTER, AND SURVEY THE WORLD.

"I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved."—Psalm cxix. 158.

Paul's "spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."—Acts xvii. 16.

"Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry."—
Ezekiel ix. 4.

"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."—
1 John v. 19.

Jesus "beheld the city, and wept over it."—Luke xix. 41.

IV.—ENTER, AND SUPPLICATE THE THRONE.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John xv. 7.

* This paper may be had of J. M. BURTON & Co., Ipswich ; 2d. per dozen, or 1s. per hundred.

- "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men."—1 Tim. ii. 1.
- "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem."—Psalm cxxii. 6.
- "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence."—Isaiah lxii. 6.
- "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified."—2 Thess. iii. 1.
- "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years."—Hab. iii. 2.

V. ENTER, AND SURRENDER YOURSELF.

- "My son, give me thine heart."—Proverbs xxiii. 26.
- "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead."—Romans vi. 13.
- "Present your bodies a living sacrifice."—Romans xii. 1.
- "Live . . . to the will of God."—1 Peter iv. 2.
- "For to me to live is Christ."—Phil. i. 21.
- "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Corinthians vi. 19, 20.

All acknowledge that a revival in the church is *greatly needed*. God has given us many promises to plead. He has also given us proofs that he *can* revive from a very low condition. And who can deny but that the first step is that which the Lord Jesus here points out, "ENTER INTO THY CLOSET?" About this there can be no controversy. This is a step which all may take. It is also one without which all other means will be useless. Who, then, will take this step? Who will "prove the Lord herewith, and see if he will not open the windows of heaven, and pour us out a blessing?"

Christian, what a privilege is set before you; what a responsibility is cast upon you! Be entreated, then, to ponder and practise your Redeemer's words. Whatever other means you adopt, begin here, abound here. Oh hearken to and heed him who on earth was "a Man of Sorrows," offering "prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears;" and who, now in heaven "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."—Matthew vi. 6.

A VOICE TO MOTHERS.*

" Our most important are our earliest years ;
 The mind, impressible and soft, with ease
 Imbibes and copies what it hears and sees,
 And throughout life's labyrinths holds fast the clue
 That Education gives her, false or true."

COWPER.

WHY the Disposer of all things sees fit to allow countless little immortals to be placed under the control of unqualified and injurious authority, especially that which binds the child to the parent, is not the province of man to inquire. It must suffice us to know that sin has wrought universal confusion. "All the foundations of the earth are out of course." But it is man's duty and privilege when we see an evil, to try and remove it, if possible, or at least to lessen it. As John Newton so emphatically expresses it—"I see in this world two heaps, of human happiness and misery. Now if I can but take the smallest bit from one heap, and add to the other, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a halfpenny, and if, by giving him another, I can wipe away his tears, I feel I have done something. I should be glad to do greater things, but I will not neglect this."

Happy, indeed, would it be for ourselves and others, if each one would "go, and do likewise:" asking himself or herself—What can I do to lessen the heap of human suffering?

Are you a *mother*? Then your position is one of the most favourable on the face of the earth for carrying out this noble principle. Dignity and power are given you: responsibility is laid upon you: for you are intrusted with dependent little immortals, who will rise up before you in the final judgment, and will testify either for or against you in that great and solemn day, according to the use or abuse you now make of the important trust committed to your care, embracing such solemn and unchangeable realities. *Therefore* you are commanded "to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Whatever your position in life may be, it matters not—it cannot absolve you one iota from the weight of this divine and universal command. For we must bear in mind that "God is no respecter of persons" as regards

* See "A Voice to Mothers." By Mrs. Henry Stace. London: Nisbet & Co.

position, it is the *conduct* in the position of which he takes account. So that, whether it is Queen Victoria or the peasant's wife, still it is the *mother* that must answer to her name here and hereafter.

Do you ever picture to yourself—what you know must assuredly come to pass—you and your children meeting in eternity? Will it be a bright and glorious meeting—a whole family in heaven, never again to part—“fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore?” Or will it be a meeting never again to meet?—a last look—an eternal farewell!

Oh, mothers! many, many of us feel that everlasting separation from our beloved children would be too overwhelming and frightful to contemplate. Yet, how many mothers profess to believe in the truths of God's word, and at the same time woefully neglect their first duties to their children! A voice from that Word, in which you profess to believe, is crying to each one of us, “Consider your ways.” What are you doing, and what are you not doing? Are you one of that great company who are rushing forward, hurried on by the power of surrounding example, with little or no forethought, but to gratify self, and which is as blind to truth as it is destructive—deluding while it fascinates—perverting the conscience and destroying the common sense even of sensible people, under the deceptive plea of “taking advantage of the increasing knowledge and improvements of the day, combined with so much pleasure—Only doing what others do?” &c. All very true and very advantageous when used, but not abused. We must keep our eyes open to understand, that these and similar expressions are often made use of to justify the omission of duty and the commission of sin.

Look within and without, and what is to be seen? On the one hand, children brought improperly forward—encouraged to regard themselves as men and women—disobedient, in consequence of declining authority on the part of parents—self-willed and bold—striving to maintain unbecoming independence and insubordination—while the dress is more generally after the fashion of the gorgeous and unchaste character of Babylon, rising up around us, than in the modest simplicity and demeanour of youth! And brought up altogether after the distorted and indecent fashions and habits so prevalent in our midst, no wonder, then, that they are reaping that corruption which all must do, who “sow to the flesh.”

This class is pitifully numerous.

On the other hand, how many dear children are left with servants, or kept out of sight in nurseries or school-rooms, at unreasonable times,

because we are told "they are in the way;" "It is not convenient to have them;" "Visitors do not like children," &c. Both these abuses come alike under the head of neglecting our children; and both are alike positive evils, which are forming a wrong foundation for future sorrows and disappointments: for we all know something of the undying effects of early education, the influences and impressions of our youth! Children so rapidly grow up, and pass from the nursery into this ensnaring world, characterised with first impressions and first experiences, that the influences must at once begin to tell either for good or evil.

Again, we call to mothers—even to *Christian mothers*. Have we a "right understanding in all things?" especially as regards our children. We must stand in the gap, continually pointing out before our children "the way, the truth, and the life;" not only in opposition to the world, the flesh, and the devil, but we must take our stand also against a certain combination of evil which presents itself under the garb of religion, and which is somewhat composed of puny romance, self-exaltation, and specious holiness! This counterfeit is as contaminating as it is attractive, ensnaring and spoiling, "through vain deceit, and after the traditions of men," multitudes of the rising generation.

This is not being taught "*the truth as it is in Jesus*;" and woeful, indeed, is the development of this "will-worship" as it rises into its maturity out of the Church of England into Rome!

Mothers have very special cause to watch against this soul-destroying *defilement*! and to regard it as one of the many signs of the time we live in, to warn us of the devices of the enemy, and to prepare us for the coming conflict. For "we know not what a day may bring forth," or how soon some of us may "stumble on the dark mountains," while we are naming the name of Christ, but *not* departing from iniquity. "Love not the world," is the absolute command of God the Holy Spirit.

Are we teaching our children by our word and practice, that "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him?" Is our "conversation (or citizenship) in heaven?" and are we, as "good soldiers," seeking to be crucified to "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life?" "For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us."

"What I say unto you, I say unto all, *Watch*."

COMFORT FOR BEREAVED PARENTS.*

I HAD little idea, when inquiring after you last week, that you had been called to wade through such deep waters, and drink so bitter a cup as your heavenly Father has seen meet to put into your hands. I can truly sympathize with you under this bereavement. Again, again, again, and again, have I stood by the dying bed of dearly beloved children,—held their fluttering pulse—watched their quivering lips—caught the last words which escaped from them, as “the gates of death” opened to receive their spirits, and in an instant shut them out from my view—and have felt my own heart-strings almost like to break—and yet, have thanked God for their release. These, dear friends, are solemn seasons. How difficult to say from the heart, “not my will, but thine be done.” At such times I have, as I doubt not you have, been thrown back upon the great principles of the Divine government and benevolent purposes of God. I never saw such a fulness, nor felt such a power in the following text, as when called to part with a lovely daughter, of five years of age, viz.—“All things work together for good to them that love God.” Hoping that both of you may have much grace, mercy, and peace here, and rest with your dear children and your Lord hereafter.

I write to express my deep sympathy with you under the dispensation of Providence through which you have been called to pass, in the sudden loss of your dear Sophia. Yours is a sorrow with only one mitigating thought and circumstance, viz., that your loss is her gain; and though you have one tie less on earth, you have one tie more in heaven. Since we last met as Bradford town missionaries, I, too, have lost my “Little Polly.” She was a strong, healthy, beautiful girl, but, after two days’ illness, God took her! It was the greatest trial that ever came to us. This is a world of trial and sorrow, and if I had no little ones left, I should be glad to fall asleep in Jesus to-morrow. But, dear friend, we must be industrious, submissive, and brave. God’s ways and time are best; let us console ourselves with the thought, that, in a little while, we shall meet our beloved ones again under better circumstances, where warmer hearts beat and holier affections glow, and disease and death never enter.

Forget not that heaven is not a place where hearts grow cold. The

* From a little work entitled “Words of Comfort for Bereaved Parents.” By William Logan. Glasgow, 1857.

departed ones love us still. They have lost nothing but the sorrows and infirmities which excited our compassion whilst they were with us. They form part of the "great cloud of witnesses." Jesus is the connecting link between them and us. O! may you meet those whose loss you mourn.

I can truly weep with you to-day! Your kind note is just to hand, informing me that our *lovely one* was called away from us yesterday morning, to be for ever with the Lord. Oh, what would I give were I this day permitted to glance for a little within the vail! Methinks I see the happy family around the throne, singing "the new song," and their heavenly Father in the midst of them! Be of good cheer, dear friends, you know that the sweet lamb is *not lost*! In a short time, by Divine aid, we shall meet Sophia and all our beloved ones who died in Jesus, to part no more.

"Indeed," says Archbishop Leighton, "it was a sharp stroke of a pen that told me your pretty Johnny was dead. Sweet thing! and is he so quickly laid asleep? Happy he. Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor being sick, nor of dying: and hath wholly escaped the troubles of schooling, and all other sufferings of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of riper years; this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now much more akin to the other world; and this will be quickly passed by us all. John has but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world, and all things superfluous beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down. It shall refresh me to hear from you soon."

WHAT IS TO BE DONE WITH OUR CHARLEY?

BY MRS. H. B. STOWE.

YES! That is the question! The fact is, there seems to be no place in heaven above, or earth beneath, exactly safe and suitable,—except the bed. While he is asleep, then our souls have rest; we know where he is and what he is about, and sleep is a gracious state; but then he wakes up bright and early, and begins tooting, pounding, hammering, singing,

meddling, and asking questions ; in short, overturning the peace of society generally, for about thirteen hours out of every twenty-four.

Everybody wants to know what to do with him—everybody is quite sure he can't stay where they are. The cook can't have him in the kitchen, where he infests the pantry to get flour to make paste for his kites, or melt lard in the new saucepan. If he goes into the woodshed, he is sure to pull the woodpile down upon his head. If he be sent up to the garret, you think for a while that you have settled the problem, till you find what a boundless field for activity is at once opened, amid all the packages, boxes, bags, barrels, and cast-off rubbish bags. Old letters, newspapers, trunks of miscellaneous contents, are all rummaged, and the very reign of chaos and old night is instituted. He sees endless capacities in all, and he is always hammering something or knocking something apart, or sawing and planing, or drawing boxes and barrels in all directions to build cities or lay railroad tracks, till everybody's head aches quite down to the lower floor, and everybody declares that Charley must be kept out of the garret.

Then you send Charley to school, and hope you are fairly rid of him for a few hours at least. But he comes home noisier and more breezy than ever, having learned of some twenty other Charleys every separate resource for keeping up a commotion that the superabundant vitality of each can originate. He can dance like Jim Smith—he has learned to smack his lips like Joe Brown—and Will Briggs has shown him how to mew like a cat—and he enters your premises with a new war-whoop, learned from Tom Evans—He feels large and valorous ! he has learned that he is a boy, and has a general impression that he is growing immensely strong and knowing, and despises more than ever the conventionalities of parlour life ; in fact, he is more than ever an interruption to the way of decent folk who want to be quiet.

It is true, that if entertaining persons will devote themselves exclusively to him, reading and telling stories, he may be kept quiet ; but then this is discouraging work, for he swallows a story as Rover does a piece of meat, and looks at you for another and another, without the slightest consideration, so that this resource is of a short duration ; and then the old question comes back, What is to be done with him ?

But after all, Charley cannot be wholly shirked, for he is an institution—a solemn and awful fact ; and on the answer to the question, what is to be done with him, depends a future.

Many a hard, morose, bitter man has come from a Charley turned off

and neglected; many a parental heart-ache has come from a Charley left to run in the streets, that mamma and sisters might play on the piano and write letters in peace. It is easy to get rid of him; there are fifty ways of doing that. He is a spirit that can be promptly laid, but if not laid aright will come back by-and-by, a strong man armed, when you cannot send him off at pleasure.

Mamma and sisters had better pay a little tax to Charley now, than a terrible one by-and-by. There is something significant in the old English phrase, with which our Scriptures render us familiar,—A man-child—a man-child. There you have the word that should make you think more than twice before you answer the question, “What shall we do with Charley?”

For to-day he is at your feet; to-day you can make him laugh, you can make him cry, and can persuade, coax, and turn him at your pleasure; you can make his eyes fill and his bosom swell with recitals of good and noble deeds; in short, you can mould him—if you will take the trouble. But look ahead some years, when that little voice shall ring in deep bass tones; when that small foot shall have a man's weight and tramp; when a rough beard shall cover that little round chin, and all the wilful strength of manhood fill out that little form. Then would you give worlds for the key to his heart, to be able to turn and guide him to your will; but if you lose that key now he is little, you may search for it carefully, with tears, some other day, and never find it. Old house-keepers have a proverb, that one hour lost in the morning is never found all day. It has a significance in this case. One thing is to be noticed about Charley, that, rude and noisy as he is, and irksome as carpet rules and parlour ways are to him, he is still a social little creature, and wants to be where the rest of the household are. A room ever so well adapted for play, cannot charm him at the hour when the family is in re-union; he hears the voices in the parlour, and his play-room seems desolate. It may be warmed with a furnace and lighted with gas, but it is human warmth and light that he shivers for; he yearns for the talk of the family, which he so imperfectly comprehends; and he longs to take his play-things down and play by you, and is incessantly promising that of the fifty improper things which he is liable to do in the parlour, he will not commit one if you let him stay there.

The instinct of the little one is nature's warning plea—God's admonition. Oh! how many a mother who has neglected it because it was irksome to have the child about, has longed at twenty-five to keep her

son by her side, and he would not. Shut out as a little Arab; constantly told that he is noisy, that he is awkward and meddlesome, and a plague in general; and the boy has found at last his own company in the streets, in the highways and hedges; where he runs till the day comes when the parents want their son, and the sisters their brother, and then they are scared at the face he brings back to them, as he comes all foul smutty from the companionship to which they doomed him. Depend upon it, if it is too much trouble to keep your boy in your society, there will be found places for him—warmed and lighted with no friendly fires—where he who finds some mischief for idle hands to do, will care for him if you do not. You may put out a tree, and it will grow while you sleep; but a son you cannot—you must take trouble for him, either a little now, or a great deal by-and-by.

Let him stay with you at least some portion of every day. Bear his noise and his ignorant ways. Put aside your book or work to tell him a story, or show him a picture; devise still parlour plays for him, for he gains nothing by being allowed to spoil the comfort of the whole circle. A pencil, a sheet of paper, and a few patterns, will sometimes keep him quiet by you for an hour while you are talking, or in the corner he may build a block-house, annoying nobody. If he does now and then disturb you, and it costs you more thought and care to regulate him there, balance which is the greatest evil—to be disturbed by him now, or when he is a man.

Of all that you can give your Charley, if you are a good man or woman, your presence is the best and safest thing. God never meant him to do without you, any more than chickens were meant to grow without being brooded. Then let him have some place in your house, where it shall be no sin to hammer and pound and make all the litter his heart desires, and his various schemes require. Even if you can ill afford the room, weigh well between that safe asylum and one which, if denied, he may make for himself in the street.

Of all the devices for Charley which we have, a few shelves which he may dignify with the name of cabinet, is one of the best. He picks up shells, and pebbles, and stones, all odds and ends, nothing comes amiss; and if you give him a pair of scissors and a little gum, there is no end of the labels he will paste on, and the hours he may innocently spend in sorting and arranging. A bottle of liquid gum is an invaluable resource for many purposes, nor must you mind though he varnishes his nose and fingers and clothes (which he will do of course) if he does nothing

worse. A cheap paint-box, and some engravings to colour, is another; and if you give him some real paint and putty to paint and putty his boats and cars, he is a made man.

All these things make trouble—to be sure they do—but Charley is to make trouble; that is the nature of the institution; you are only to choose between safe and wholesome trouble, and the trouble that comes at last like a whirlwind. God bless the little fellow, and send us all grace to know what to do with him!

TO PARENTS.

THE heart of a child can feel the soft gush of love that flows from a heart made glad with the rich and sweet love of Christ. Oh! that each one of you would learn to bring his child, as soon as born, to the throne of grace, and to the arms of Christ. You owe much to your babes—they will one day be men as you are, work at the same trade, have the same foes to war with, and the same God to serve. If you would not wish them, when they are grown up, to be a plague and a curse to the land of their birth, oh! bring them, when young, to the feet of Christ, give them to God, yield them up to the Lord that bought them with his own blood. Teach them, as soon as they can learn, the ways and works of God. Take them to look at the bright arch that spans the vault of the sky, and tell them who it was that said, “I do set my bow in the clouds.” Tell them that this bow is a proof to us of God’s love and truth, and that he will no more drown the world as once he did. Bid them gaze on the sun with its clear warm rays, and the moon with its pale beams, and tell them that it was God who made those two great lights, one to rule the day, and one to rule the night; and that that same God came down to earth and was made a man, and took our sins, and bled for us, that he might make us shine as the sun in the world to come. You may pass from star to star in the deep blue sky, and tell them “He made the stars too;” and the hand that now guides all those bright worlds, and holds them up in their march through the sky, is the same hand that once held out to babes. Tell them that he holds the wind in his fist, and the sea in the palm of his hand; and there is not a tree, or a plant, or a leaf, which his hand did not shape, a form of grace which his skill did not mould, or a word or a drop which his heart did not frame, nor a spot in the vast realms of space on which his eye did not rest.”—*Gems of Protestant Truth.*

TEACH CHILDREN TO PRAY.

If you love your children do all that lies in your power to train them to a habit of prayer. Show them how to begin. Tell them what to say. Encourage them to persevere. Remind them if they become careless and slack about it. Let it not be your fault, if they never call on the name of the Lord.

This is the first step in religion which a child is to take. Long before he can read, you can teach him to kneel by his mother's side, and repeat the simple words of prayer and praise which he puts in his mouth. If there is any habit which your own hand and eyes should help in forming, it is the habit of prayer. Many a grey-haired man could tell you how his mother used to teach him to pray, where he knelt, and what he was taught to say. It will come up as fresh before him as if it were but yesterday.—*Ryle*.

THINGS TO GIVE.

Our hearts to God. Proverbs xxiii. 26.
 Praise to him. Psalm xcvi. 7, 8.
 Thanks to him. 1 Thessalonians v. 18.
 Our bodies a living sacrifice. Romans xii. 1.
 Our money to the poor. Luke vi. 38.
 God loves the cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians ix. 7.
 More blessed to give than to receive. Acts xx. 35.

THINGS TO KEEP.

Our hearts with diligence. Proverbs iv. 23.
 The commands of God. 1 John iii. 24.
 The truth. Proverbs xxiii. 23.
 A good conscience. 1 Timothy i. 19.
 The tongue from evil. Psalm xxxiv. 13.
 Ourselves unspotted. James i. 27.
 The Sabbath day. Exodus xx. 8.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE SHORTNESS AND FRAILITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 4, 1859,

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE M.A.

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."—
Job xvi. 22.

ANOTHER year, brethren, passing away invites to seriousness, meditation, searching and solemn thought. Years are not given us merely to write histories by, or to count our gains and losses by, to notify great changes in legislation, or to mark the time when over the many million populations of India our sovereign claimed more immediate sway. These years are given for ends bearing immediately on our moral happiness; our hopes, our opportunities, our responsibilities are all measured by these divisions of time. The life, which is but of a hand-breadth, gives its own complexion to an immortal existence, and the year that has now just gone from us for ever will revive, and bear fruit, and meet us again. How we come by our idea of time we hardly know. Philosophers tell us that in our notion of it we make an unconscious reference to space, and that a remembered succession or series of events answers to that mental image by which we call up the successive portions of a traversed journey. For the accuracy of the illustration as regards all practical purposes we have the authority of Scripture. Life is constantly represented as a journey, and our years are the way-marks set upon the road. And as we pass another, and another, and another, of these we cannot help feeling that the distance which we have to go is shorter—a matter of joy to us if through grace we can feel we are travelling right, but a cause of great searching of heart if we remember that the journey, once ended, there is no returning or retracing of steps; for, says the patriarch—"When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

This is not one of Job's fretful speeches; it is one in which he is giving

Mother's Magazine, February, 1859.

forth the utterances of an inspired philosophy, and as applied to our first Lecture in the new year may fittingly suggest a few practical reflections, as well on the frailty of life as on the irreversible issues of death.

The text would first invite to some reflections on the shortness and frailty of human life. "When a few years are come." Almost every image that could be thought of to denote transitoriness, fleetness, brief duration, sudden change will be found in Scripture as an emblem of human life. Our days are represented as passing from us just as an eagle hasteneth to her prey, as the swift post flies on his errand, as the ships of Ebeah cleave a path through the waters, as the weaver's shuttle darts through the web, as the rolling clouds move in the air. Or, again, our life is a flower clothed in glory for a day, a shepherd's tent, which on the morrow will be removed to some other place—a vapour, curling up for a moment into some beautiful shape and then dissolving into nothingness—a shadow, flinging its bold outline across our path, and in an instant departing to leave no trace behind. We cannot err as to the intended moral of all this beautiful poetry; it is to convince us all how short our time is, to show to us what a shifting pageant it is in which we are each playing such a labourious part, busy, anxious, full of life and its mighty projects. We learn, hence, that in a short time we must each one make room for somebody else. "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

But let us consider some of the senses in which this expression, a few years, may be taken. Thus it may be taken in a contingent sense with a sad reference to life's uncertainty, to the consciousness which should be present to all of us, that the invisible guiding hand which struck down our friend during the past year may be led to lay us low the next. In this view the word few may be taken in its most severe and absolute sense. It may mean three years, or two years, or even one, but it behoves the youngest, and the strongest, and most full of hope amongst us, to speak as Job spake. Every day throws fresh confusion into our calculated probabilities of life's duration. Death seems to be always finding some new door which we had left out of our account, and which we had not provided against, it seemed to be too remote a contingency to be numbered among human likelihoods. Go through the number of those friends whom you have lost since this time last year, and see how many of them you expected to lose. Here and there one perhaps has just met your prophecies; they had been for sometime pale, or flushed, or wasted, or tottering in step, or breaking up with age, and it gave you no surprise to hear of their somewhat sudden removal. But with by far the most of those you have missed it was not so. They seemed to have happiness laid up for a great while to come, and no reason existed why, of them more than of any of yourselves it should be said, "When one short year is come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

But, commonly, the word few is used in some comparative sense. The labourers in the field of the gospel are said to be few compared with the plenteousness of the harvest; they who find the way of life are said to be few compared with those by whom the way is missed; and so in the text the years of our life are said to be few, compared with the many things which have to be done therein, in order to fit us for a condition of immortality. The comparison comes natural to us. In all great works to be done, we almost intuitively consider as an element of the difficulty the question of time. The surprise of the Jews when they supposed our Lord

to say, that he would rebuild their temple after it was destroyed was not that he should rebuild it, but that what it had cost forty and six years to accomplish, he should be able to do in three days. Well, the building up of the spiritual temple does not always require forty and six years, though it may require threescore years and ten. But whatever the unknown limit be, the years always seem to be getting shorter as that limit is approached ; or as the work to be done in it remains in an unfinished state. The fact, as you perceive, cries aloud against the folly of all delayed repentances. God gives to each one of us as much spiritual work as we can do in the time, and to do it safely, or happily, or well, it will take all the time. He who begins to labour the soonest, never finds his work in advance ; and he who continues on to the latest, never finds that he has any years to spare. No ! education for heaven is not a thing to be done in a day, least of all in one of our sick, and feeble, and worn out days. To subdue the power of sin, to get disengaged from the ties of the world, to change the bias of an evil heart, and acquire a relish and taste for holiness, to become skilled in those higher acquisitions of the saintly life—how to wait, how to hope, how to be silent, how to sit still—oh, we want a long life for this. Grace may dispense with it sometimes, and does ; as when our young righteous are taken away from the evil to come ; and then the green blade is as fit for the garner as the shock of corn in its season. But in all cases were longer time is granted, longer time is required ; and then, if a portion of these years be wasted, what arrearages of work are thrown forward to the remainder ; and thus we fail to make any advance. We have everything to unlearn and undo. We are as husbandmen who have only a few more days of seed time left, and there is all the fallow ground to be broken up ; and thus the fear that we may not have time enough disables us from using well the time we have. Danger puts new swiftness into the wings of time. To the lost traveller on the mountains, how short the hours become as they draw nearer night-fall ; and, if in the great affair of our salvation we suffer twenty, or thirty, or forty years of our life to pass idly and unimproved away, what can we expect but that much work will make short days, and that the apprehension of failure may make us lose all heart. Satan, who, at the beginning of life plies us with the bold assaults of presumption, at the close of life finds it better to suggest in whispers of despair, “It is too late to repair life’s waste now, I am too near my journey’s end. When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.”

But again, I think the time that remains to us is described by the phrase “few years,” because howsoever many they be, they will appear few when they are past. For the truth of this, I may appeal with confidence to the experience of the aged. They are the longest livers who realise life’s shortness the most. “The days of our years are threescore years and ten ; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow”—so soon passeth it away and we are gone.” So soon—for that which makes fourscore years appear so few is, that they are gone by. We read in Scripture of one who lived far more than fourscore years bearing a like testimony. “And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou ? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are threescore years and ten,”—but it seems a short time to me now—“Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.” Yes ! there is a striking truth in that image of the Psalmist we considered this time last year, “We

bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told."* We know what our thoughts and recollections of a tale are when it is finished, However long it may have been, and however varied, we just retain impressions of leading characters, graphic incidents, skilful plots; all the rest condenses into unmarked common places. And it is so with the longest life. When it is drawing to its close, the whole history gets compressed into a few marked passages; memory gathers up something eventful in childhood, something bright in youth, a struggle here, a disappointment there, here a great mercy, and there a great mistake. But the rest of life's tale is a poor, flat, incidentless thing, undistinguished, and unremembered, seeing it is past, as a watch in the night. The thought, you perceive, brethren, presses for consideration on old and young alike. You may have many years to live, but they will not appear many when you have lived them out. What the text seems to suggest is, that the duration of the future should be measured by the mind's estimate of the duration of the past. Assume, for example, that you have ten more years to live, to know whether this is a long time or a short time, measure it by what appears to you now the length of the last ten years. Something important and noticeable occurred about that time; realise the fact, that after a corresponding lapse for the future you will be no more seen. Such a method of measuring your length of days from the other end of the line cannot fail to leave upon the heart a salutary impression of the shortness of life. We know that as old age draws on, all past events,—that is, all events long past—appear at pretty nearly the same distance from us. Our dull faculties confound and destroy all perspective. The event of thirty years back seems but yesterday, and it is only yesterday if it occurred fifty years ago. And in like manner that future, which is bearing all the weight of our procrastinated purposes, that future into which some of us are crowding so much work, that future in which heaven is to be gained, and the Saviour is to be won, and the old man is to be cast out, and the soul's lost image is to be recovered and restored, will soon become a past, and when it is past it will then become of yesterday. Wherefore, brethren, let us all calculate our length of days, according to Job's life-table; let us reckon our years backwards, that is, not by what they are in prospect, but what they will seem in review. This will, indeed, make all our days as a handbreadth; and even he of this congregation, who shall outlive all the rest, might say with all truth, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

I note one other thought, which could hardly have been out of the patriarch's mind, when he spoke of his remaining years as few, namely, that they must be few—incomparable, and beyond all arithmetical reduction few—when compared with the life which was to succeed. This should be always an element in the Christian's computation of time. We shall

* See Penny Pulpit, No. 2,900.

never get at the true length of our years without it. If the Apostle Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, had taken for his guidance any of our human calendars he would have said, "That light affliction which has been upon me for nearly thirty years;" but instead of this he recollects that time is not to be estimated by this standard at all. Length of service must be compared with length of reward—increase the one and you diminish the other, and this without limit; so that if the duration of the succeeding recompense become infinitely great, the duration of the service becomes inappreciably small. What does this long period of thirty years, through which Paul was persecuted, come to now! Dispute his arithmetic who can—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And the rule, it is plain, applies to everything connected with our life, its possessions its hopes, its trials, its fears—this one thought reduces and contracts them, all. Who cares to be king for a day! Who for one morsel of meat would become another's servant for the rest of his life! Or, on the other hand, who would not endure sorrow for a night to be assured that he should enter upon a life of endless joy on the morrow! Or bear that God should hide his face from him for a little moment only that afterwards he may gather him with everlasting mercies. And this thought of eternity makes the years of all of us few. Methuselah and the infant of days who died but yesterday are both of an age. The differences of length in their little life take nothing from the span of an infinite existence, and in this life only ought we to look at days, weeks, months, and years. Whilst we are looking at things seen and temporal, there is no doubt the life that remains to us will appear to be one of indefinite extent; but if we read by the light of things unseen and eternal, our daily language will be—"When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

"Whence I shall not return." And this suggests another train of solemn reflections connected with the irreversible issues of death. Be it that the years which remain to me may be few absolutely, or must be few relatively, or shall appear few when they are past, yet one thing is certain, that my term ended, "I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

Here, first, we should note the moral scope of the expression. Job is not to be understood when he says, "I am going the way whence I shall not return," as if he would exclude the possibility of his return to earth bodily to visit his friends, and renew his employments, to tell life's tale a second time—his design is manifestly to indicate the fixedness of his spiritual state when these few years of life shall have run out. His meaning is, I shall go to the place whence I shall not return for any of the available purposes of salvation, for repentance, for prayer, for making reconciliation, for seeking a Redeemer in some second probation which I had neglected to make in my first. It is a place where all is determined, unalterable, final; where as each

tree falls, so it lies ; where he that is unjust is unjust still ; where he that is holy will be holy still. He had used similar language in the 7th chapter—“As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away : so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.” To which we may not unfittingly add that exhortation of the wise man—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” That a truth which the pen of inspiration had written so plainly, without a single text which could be made to look in an opposite way, should ever have been matter of controversy among professing Christians appears, at first sight, passing strange ; but we must in these cases always bear one thing in mind, namely, that corruption of principle was in the heart before there was corruption of doctrine in the church. It may be true—it is true—that Rome derives her unscriptural tenet of purgatory from the deductions of heathen philosophy and the wild flights of epic song, but we might have referred to one source of the invention to a higher antiquity than even this, and that is to man’s corrupt and blinded conscience, refusing to believe that he should be banished for ever from God’s presence on one probation only. And hence it is that Germany and Rome are in this matter found nearly side by side ; like Herod and Pontius Pilate, by a common hatred of Christ they are made friends. Not that the rationalists and papists are agreed in their espousal of purgatorial falsity, but only in their attempt to undermine the correlative Christian truth. The church forbids us on pain of persecution to say, that after this life there shall be no ulterior cleansing for imperfect and unholy souls ; the merciful nature of God forbid, say the disciples of Strauss, that man should pass from this state of being into a condition of remediless and everlasting torment without one more trial ; and so they take up arms together, not to fight for purgatory, but to fight against the Bible. Only, say they, do not tie up all hope to this present state, only allow some kind of bridge to be passed over between this life and the penal eternity, only do not say to a man that sin persisted in as long as it could, of offers of mercy rejected as often as he could, of the Holy Ghost resisted as wantonly as he could, the Son of God trampled on as much as he could—only do not say that this will disqualify him for immortal happiness, but just allow that in some intermediate state of existence he may try for the unfading crown again. But, Christian brethren, as we hope for that crown ourselves, we must, as I reminded you last Tuesday—keep the faith, against the rationalist who make free with the mercy of God, and against the papist who presumptuously adds to his truth ; we must hold unreservedly that such as we are when the immortal spirit flies, such shall we be found on the resurrection morn ; that our life once over there will be no repairing of neglects, no recalling of opportunities, no retracing of steps, no coming back once more to praying ground. “But when a few years are come, we shall go the way whence we shall not return.”

And now, brethren, let me gather up some of the lessons of our subject. I speak to many who must take up the words of our text in their most literal sense—"When a *few* years are come, I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Your years to come must be few, because your years past have been many. Well, what have you been doing with those many? They have been fifty, or sixty, or perhaps seventy years of offered grace, of repeated calls, of faithful warnings, of awakening providences: you have had literally during this period your eight or nine years of Sabbaths only. What a mass of teaching to be answerable for; what a swelling aggregate is there of holy opportunities, almost a life in itself, if on coming to manhood you had lived no more. And your work, how stands it? You were born under condemnation. Are you under condemnation still? Once you were without Christ, are you without Christ still? Has nothing been done for the soul all this time? No refuge sought from its doom, no righteousness found for its guilt, no mansion provided for its reception, no Saviour importuned to undertake its cause? Has your life been all wasted, all unprofitable, all of the earth, earthy? Have you made nothing of your day of grace and visitation? And yet your sun is going down. Have you mistaken a sound creed for a good hope? The being as religious as other people to be any security for yourselves? Have you rested on outward pieties for a work of grace, or on a name to live for life? These are questions, brethren, which may be profitable for all of us at this time. A departed year should be an universal monitor, to the young to renew their vows, to the old to consider their ways, to the worldly to come out and flee, to the godly to watch and pray. To many of us it is morally certain this monitor is speaking for the last time. To others he may speak at the end of this year, to a reduced number he may speak at the end of the next, but to none will he speak very often, seeing that even the youngest among us must take up the language of our text—"When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

But let me come to some other practical lessons. As thus—it should teach us to get our hearts fixed upon the true rest, while our few years are continued, and be gradually preparing for our final rest when these years are gone. Let our souls be staid on the right rest now. We know where it is, what it is, who it is says—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" rest from the buffetings of a changeful world, rest from the tossings of an anxious heart, rest from the accusations of an upbraiding conscience, rest from the suggestions of a desponding and fearful mind. Remember the words of the Lord while he was yet with us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Not in the world ye shall have rest, for that is to be found in him, and in him only; in him as the peace for the troubled, as the surety for the condemned, as the life for the dying, as the salvation for the lost; in him as the prisoner's hope, the wanderer's light, the mourner's brother, the sinner's friend. And his invitations are boundless

as his love is free ; he speaks to all. Ye who are weary and heavy laden, come ; ye, who would have your pardon sealed, come ; ye, who would have your souls refreshed, come ; ye who would have strength to fulfil those sacred resolves with which every Christian loves to mark the opening year, come—all things are ready ; ministering angels are ready ; the smile of God is ready ; ready are the succours of the blessed Spirit, and ready is the hand of a supporting Saviour that your footsteps should not fail. Arise and depart, for this is not your rest, and thus habitually prepare for your final rest when the few years are gone. Get skilled in the art of dying daily, of anticipating the summons to an eternal world. We ought to prepare for surprises ; we ought to get into the thought of expecting death at any moment, to get used to the idea of passing, it may be, at short notice from cherished scenes, sweet enjoyments, dear associations, loving hearts : and of so passing away too as that we may bring honour to our religion and glory to our Saviour, and comfort, the only comfort we can, but still the best, to the sorrowing friends we must leave behind. But for all this we want strength, strength to wrestle with accusing powers, strength to plead the promises with unfaltering hopes, strength to tread defyingly on every rising fear, and strength to enter on the dark valley, leaning in calm trustfulness on the Saviour's rod and staff. We would not pass out of this world in a tumult of amazement ; we would not be saved so as by fire ; we would not seem to be borne to the mansions of the world unseen on the black clouds of an awful peradventure ; but we would rather fall asleep gently, die in peace, receive that blessed anticipation and assured hope that gentle dismissal of the angel of God—" Go thou thy way till the end be for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Sketches and Essays.

WHAT HINDERS REVIVAL?

BY FRANCIS WAYLAND, D.D.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John xv. 7.

Why have not the prayers of the Church of God received, and why do they not now receive, a more abundant answer?

God has promised that he will do whatsoever his children ask, if they abide in him, and his words abide in them. He has said that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. The whole church daily, and many times a day, prays, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." If it be demanded, When have we seen the answers to these prayers? I ask in how far is the church of Christ fulfilling the condition on which the prevalence of prayer depends? Of the millions called by the name of Christ, what is the proportion of those who abide in him? . . . If we turn to Protestant Churches, where shall we find one that is suffering persecution for the faithfulness of its testimony for Jesus? Where is the church that can be singled out among men as crucified with Christ, victorious over the world, a living and consistent witness for God? It matters not to say that there are good men in all these churches; of course there are. But is not the number of those in whom the word of God abides,—who, without conferring with flesh and blood, follow Christ through evil and through good report—lamentably small? How small is the proportion of those good men, whose piety attains to the standard of apostolic times! We pray for the conversion of the heathen world, but who makes sacrifices for the souls of the heathen? We pray for a revival of religion at home, but who obeys Christ, and devotes any portion of his time to the work of warning men of their danger, and telling them of the love of a Saviour?

If we expect an answer to our prayers for any particular blessing, the word of Christ that has respect to that particular thing must specially abide in us. If we pray that the kingdom of Christ may come, we must

obey those words of Christ which concern the coming of his kingdom. We must seek first the kingdom of God. We must make the progress of the religion of Christ the real object for which we live. We must labour, and suffer reproach, and endure cheerfully the scorn of men, and hold our property and all that we call our own subject every moment to the will of the Master, that so we may glorify his name in the conversion of souls. This was the type of primitive piety, and hence it was that the prayers of the saints then prevailed mightily to the pulling down of strongholds. Our prayers will never in like manner prevail, until we follow their example. The Lord's arm is not shortened that he cannot save, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear. Our God is a living God, as truly as he was in the days of the apostles. The Holy Spirit is as powerful to bow the heart of man in penitence as he was of old. But we must abide in Christ, if we expect him to descend as on the day of Pentecost. The real power of the church of Christ resides neither in numbers, nor wealth, nor social position, nor learning, nor talent, but in holiness. When the standard of piety in the church shall reach the point of self-sacrificing love, and simple earnest obedience to all the words of Christ, then, and not till then, shall the greatness of the kingdom be given to the saints of the Most High.

This subject may also teach us why so many of our prayers on our own behalf remain unanswered. You have been a professor of religion for many years, and looking back upon your Christian life, perceive that you have made but small progress in holiness. It may be that your evidences of piety grow dimmer as you grow older. Religion has become with you a matter of form, rather than an earnest and ever present reality. You have an obscure hope that you shall be saved, but you can hardly tell on what it rests, for you do not know in whom you have believed. You are dissatisfied with yourself. At times you are alarmed at your condition. You tell us that you pray daily for deliverance and for the light of God's countenance, but your prayers are not answered. You sink deeper and deeper in despondency, and you can find no access to the throne of the heavenly grace.

Dear reader, is there not a cause? You pray, but does the word of Christ abide in you? Are you honestly and earnestly labouring to keep all Christ's commandments? Have you broken off from everything, in word, and thought, and action, that you know is displeasing to him; and are you doing his will at all hazards and at all sacrifices? When you think of submitting your actual, practical, everyday life to Christ, do

you not know that before you can do this, a great change must pass over you? The world, its wealth, its pleasures, its ambitions, and its society are engrossing those affections that belong only to God, and encroaching sadly upon those hours which should be given to prayer, meditation, doing good, and the social worship of the saints. What self-denials are you enduring for Christ, what crosses are you taking up and bearing after Jesus? So long as you live thus, it is all in vain to talk about praying for holiness and communion with God. The words of Christ must abide in you, if you would have prevalence in prayer. If you love Christ, you must keep his commandments, though in so doing you break loose from every other association, and stand perfectly alone. You never will have the witness in yourself until you make sacrifices for Christ. Until you do your first works, and strengthen the things that are ready to die, your prayers for the indwelling of the Spirit will be as the idle wind. Yea, though you cry aloud and shout, God will not hear your prayer. Awake, thou that sleepest; arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

These same remarks apply emphatically to our prayers for our relatives and friends.

You are a parent. You are anxious, and justly so, about the eternal welfare of your children. You tell us you pray for them daily, and you ask your friends to pray for them. They are, nevertheless, growing up to be worldly and thoughtless, and are evidently wandering farther and farther from God. Your prayers are unanswered, and it seems as if the promises of God, in your case, had utterly failed.

It may be, Christian parent, that God is making trial of your faith. But before you accuse God of unfaithfulness, it may be well to ask, have the words of Christ, respecting this particular thing, abode in you. Have you brought these children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and sedulously guarded them from every influence adverse to their salvation? You have prayed for them, have you prayed with them? Have you, on every suitable occasion, set before them their danger, and pointed them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world? Have you never, for the sake of worldly advantage, placed them in circumstances under which every serious reflection would naturally be dissipated? When ambition for social position leads in one direction, and the will of God in another, which do you really desire your children to follow? Parents have sometimes desired me to converse with their children on the subject of personal religion, while I knew that they were

exposing them to all those influences which must render every effort for their salvation utterly hopeless. Brethren, if we desire that our prayers should be answered, our lives and our prayers must be in harmony. It is mocking God, to ask him to do something for us, and then place every obstacle in our power in the way of his doing it. Unless the word of Christ abide in us, we can never ask in faith that God will hear us.

COMFORT FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED.

BY THE REV. JAMES SMITH, OF CHELTENHAM.

MANY of the Lord's little ones doubt their interest in Christ, their acceptance with God, and their title to everlasting life. In consequence of this, they are not happy; and they are afraid to profess Christ, nor can they be as active for Christ as they should. I want to write a few lines that may be of use to such, if the Lord will. The occasion of my doing so is, I have just received a letter from a godly minister, who, speaking of one of his congregation, says, "Poor thing, her cry, very often when I am talking to her, is, *If I were but sure: But I am not quite sure.*" She has a hope, and so have many, but that is not satisfactory. She wants to be sure, quite sure. Well, we cannot blame her for this; for certainty, on a matter of so much importance as the salvation of the soul, is most desirable. But ought not such persons to be sure? Let us examine the case a little, endeavour to impart a little comfort, and give a word of advice.

"*If I were but sure.*" This indicates a deep sense of the value and importance of salvation—betrays a jealousy of self, manifests a fear of deception, and is the very breathing of sincerity. Such language never characterised the mind of the presumptuous, or the hypocrite, or any one dead in sin. Such characters never feel this concern, are never exercised with such fears, never heartily exclaim, "*If I were but quite sure.*"

"*If I were but quite sure.*" This exclamation proves the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. He has convinced of sin, of danger, and of a judgment to come. He has shown the soul the value of salvation, the importance of an interest in Christ, and the necessity of a thorough change of heart. The soul that utters this cry is taught of God, and knows something of the plague of the heart, of the power of Satan, and of the deceitfulness of sin. It will not build on a sandy foundation, be satisfied

with uncertain evidences, or stop short of union with Christ. It must make sure work, it must have Scriptural evidences, it must be satisfied with heartfelt experimental proof. Wherever this is the case, there is the work of the Spirit of God, for nature cannot produce this, and Satan would not if he could.

"I am not quite sure." Perhaps you want more to assure you than the Scriptures warrant; you may be unnecessarily doubtful. Have you faith in Christ? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God—and as the result do you receive his Word, rest on his finished work, and rely alone on his great atoning sacrifice? If so, *you ought to be quite sure*; for holy Scripture says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." And again, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." If every believer is born of God, if every one that has faith in Christ is a child of God, then if you believe in Jesus, if you have faith in Christ, however feeble your faith may be, *you ought to be sure that you are God's child*. Do you call Jesus Lord, and, bowing to his authority, take his word for your rule, looking upon everything that is contrary thereunto to be sin? Then holy Scripture saith, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." If, therefore, you confess that Jesus is the Lord, treat his Word as law, and desire to render to him the obedience of the heart and life, you must have the Holy Ghost; and *if you have thus the Holy Ghost you ought to be quite sure*. Are you sorry for your sins? Do you confess them before God, and seek grace so that you may turn from them, and live godly, righteously, and soberly, in the present world? If so, God has given you repentance unto life, and having repentance unto life, you can never perish, and therefore, *you ought to be quite sure*. Do you love the Lord's people, and love them most who are most holy, and most like Christ? Then *you ought to be quite sure*, for the Apostle John says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not to enlarge, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Do you not acknowledge Christ Jesus to be the Lord, the Messiah, the Son of God? Do you not believe that God raised him from the dead, as a proof of the perfection of his work, and as a testimony to his divinity? Then *you ought to be quite sure*, for the Word of God says you shall be saved.

"I am not quite sure." Perhaps you are judging yourself by a wrong standard, and measuring yourself by a wrong rule. You are looking for

that in yourself that you will only find in Christ ; or you are looking for something in yourself to put in the place of Christ. You are to be saved as a sinner, only as a sinner, as nothing but a sinner. You will never find anything in yourself on which to rest, or with which to be satisfied. The more you look into yourself, the more depravity you will discover, the viler you will seem to become, and the more the desperate wickedness of the heart will be revealed to you. You will be compelled to turn away from self entirely, and rest on Christ alone. You will be obliged to look for pardon on the ground of his blood alone, and expect to be justified for the sake of his obedience alone, and to be sanctified by his Spirit alone. You will be compelled to seek everything in Christ, and take him to be your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The eye must be fixed on Jesus, and be kept fixed on Jesus ; and if that is the case, *you may feel sure, quite sure, that you are in Christ.*

"I am not quite sure." Rest not in this state, for you may be quite sure, you ought to be quite sure. Read the Word of God more. Run from everything within you, and without you, to Christ alone. Keep the eye steadily fixed on Jesus as the sinner's substitute ; as the great sacrifice for sin ; as dying the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God ; as coming into the world on purpose to save sinners ; and as able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Oppose to all temptations, and buffetings of Satan, the glorious fact, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin ; resist him in the faith of this when he comes to tempt you to doubt, fear, and, despond, and he will flee from you. Finally, seek earnestly, importunately, and with all simplicity of soul, the sealing and witness of the Holy Spirit. By the application of the atoning blood, and the promises of Holy Scripture, he will seal you unto the day of redemption ; and by his gracious work in your soul he will assure your conscience, and bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God. With the eye fixed on Jesus, with the hope built on Jesus, with the Holy Spirit in the heart, and resisting Satan stedfastly, believing in the power, virtue, and everlasting efficacy of the blood of the Lamb, you will no longer have to say, except in seasons of darkness and violent temptation, *"If I were but sure ;"* but will rejoice in God and confidently say, *"I am quite sure, I am the Lord's, and the Lord is mine."*

THE EXHAUSTLESS FULNESS.

BY DR. GUTHRIE.

"It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness *dwell*;" dwell, not come and go, like a wayfaring man who tarrieth but a night, who is with us to-day, and away to-morrow; not like the shallow, noisy, treacherous brook that fails, when most needed, in heat of summer; but like this deep-seated spring, that rising silently though affluently at the mountain's foot, and having unseen communication with its exhaustless supplies, is ever flowing over its grassy margin, equally unaffected by the long droughts that dry the wells, and the frosts that pave the neighbouring lake with ice. So fail the joys of earth; so flow, supplied by the fulness that is in Christ, the pleasures and the peace of piety. It cannot be otherwise. "If a man love me," says Jesus, "he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

I have read how, in the burning desert, the skeletons of unhappy travellers, all withered and white, are found, not only on the way to the fountain, but lying grim and ghastly on its banks, with their skulls stretched over its very margin. Panting, faint, their tongue cleaving to the roof of their mouth, ready to fill a cup with gold for its fill of water, they press on to the well, steering their course by the tall palms that stand full of hope above the glaring sands. Already, in fond anticipation, they drink where others had been saved. They reach it. Alas! sad sight for the dim eyes of fainting men,—the well is dry. With stony horror in their looks, how they gaze into the empty basin, or fight with man and beast for some muddy drops that but exasperate their thirst! The desert reels around them. Hope expires. Some cursing, some praying, they sink, and themselves expire. And by-and-by the sky darkens, lightnings flash, loud thunders roll, the rain pours down; and, fed by the showers, the treacherous waters rise to play in mockery with long fair tresses, and kiss the pale lips of death.

But yonder, where the cross stands up high to mark the fountain of the Saviour's blood, and heaven's sanctifying grace, no dead souls lie. Once a Golgotha, Calvary has ceased to be a place of skulls. Where men went once to die, they go now to live; and to none that ever went there to seek pardon, and peace, and holiness, did God ever say, "Seek ye me in vain." There are times when the peace of God's people, always

like a river, is like one in flood, overflowing its margin, and rolling its mighty current between bank and brae. There are times when the righteousness of God's people, always like the waves of the sea, seems like the tide at the stream, as, swelling beyond its ordinary bounds, it floats the boats and ships that lie highest, driest on the beach. But at all times and seasons, faith and prayer find fulness of mercy to pardon, and of grace to sanctify, in Jesus Christ. The supply is inexhaustible.

Mountains have been exhausted of their gold, mines of their diamonds, and the depths of ocean of their pearly gems. The demand has emptied the supply. Over once busy scenes, silence and solitude now reign; the caverns ring no longer to the miner's hammer, nor is the song of the pearl-fisher heard upon the deep. But the riches of grace are inexhaustible. All that have gone before us have not made them less, and we shall make them no less to those who follow us. When they have supplied the wants of unborn millions, the last of Adam's race, that lonely man, over whose head the sun is dying, beneath whose feet the earth is reeling, shall stand by as full a fountain as this day invites you to drink and live, to wash and be clean.

I have found it an interesting thing to stand on the edge of a noble rolling river, and to think, that although it has been flowing on for six thousand years, watering the fields, and slaking the thirst of a hundred generations, it shows no sign of waste or want; and when I have watched the rise of the sun, as he shot above the crest of the mountain, or in a sky draped with golden curtains, sprang up from his ocean bed, I have wondered to think that he has melted the snows of so many winters, and renewed the verdure of so many springs, and painted the flowers of so many summers, and ripened the golden harvests of so many autumns, and yet shines as brilliant as ever, his eye not dim, nor his natural strength abated, nor his floods of light less full for centuries of boundless profusion. Yet what are these but images of the fulness that is in Christ? Let that feed your hopes, and cheer your hearts, and brighten your faith, and send you away this day happy and rejoicing. For, when judgment flames have licked up that flowing stream, and the light of that glorious sun shall be quenched in darkness or veiled in the smoke of a burning world, the fulness that is in Christ shall flow on throughout eternity in the bliss of the redeemed. Blessed Saviour, Image of God, Divine Redeemer! in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. What thou hast gone to heaven to prepare, may we be called up at death to enjoy!

"LORD, THAT OUR EYES MAY BE OPENED!"

THE soul has eyes as well as the body. With the inward eyes we see our true selves, and our sins, and our need of salvation. Most men think they use their *inward* eyes, when they only use their *outward*. All men are inwardly blind, till Christ touches their eyes, and gives them power to see. A great multitude followed Jesus from Jericho, who *thought* they could see; and yet the two blind men, sitting by the wayside, who only *heard* of Jesus, could see better than the multitude with all their eyes. These two blind men had their inward eyes opened, and were using them. They saw that Jesus was the Lord, the son of David. They saw that Jesus had power to heal. They tried whether he had compassion to listen to *them*, and to wait and cure them.

The Lord opened the *outward* eyes of these men, to make the multitude understand what he wishes to do to the *inward eyes* of all men. If your soul could only see, what a different world would *this* seem! how different the world to come! What dangers would you see, that you don't see now! what blessings that, in your blindness, you now pass by! If you could only see Jesus as the LORD—if you could only feel so sure that he is near you, going about working miracles of mercy, that you could cry out to him; would that not be the beginning of a new, altogether different way of living?

The multitude rebuked these two men. "Hold your peace," they cried. They wanted only to follow Jesus in their ignorant stupid way; merely to see or hear the wonderful man—and then go home, and be what they always were. But these two men knew that Jesus wanted to *do his work*—his glorious work of healing—of being a real Saviour. They felt sure he would rather stop, and do his work of mercy on two blind men, than have a multitude crowding round him, and refusing to come to him for help—looking *at* him—never looking *to* him.

Come you out of that multitude. Your first duty in now hearing that Jesus passes by, is to CRY to HIM for mercy. Don't be ashamed who hears you, who laughs at you, who tells you to hold your peace. Think what a mercy it will be to get sight—to have your eyes opened. Think what a mercy to get the power of looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of your faith. Think what a mercy to feel his fingers on your eyes, and his sweet words in answer to your cry, "What will ye that I shall do unto you?" Think what a mercy to be, all your life after, a

seeing soul. The Lord will give you something worth seeing. A single promise put before you by his hand will be like a glimpse of glory.

But, remember, Jesus is *passing by*. It is not every day you have *heard* that he was near you. You may never hear again. He may be willing to stop at your cry *now*, and yet he may stop his ears at your cry *some* other day, if you stop yours at his word to-day. The rich man, Christ tells us, lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torment, and cried for a drop of water—and it was refused. The Fountain of Living Water is running here, and if you will, you may plunge your dry lips in, and quench your thirst for ever. Cry then, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David!" "Lord, that our eyes may be opened!"

A MESSAGE TO MOTHERS.

It is, under God, to the prayers and perseverance of Monica that the church owes Augustine. It was Judith, the step-mother of Alfred, that first moulded his heart, and prepared him to be one of England's saintliest monarchs. Bishop Hall records his indebtedness to his mother in terms that place her beside Monica. Halyburton acknowledges his great obligation to the early religious training of his mother. The mother of Doddridge, the mother of the Wesleys, have come down to us linked with the piety of their illustrious children. The agency of the mothers of Newton, Cecil, and Claudius Buchanan, in the conversion of their sons, is well known. Indeed, Christian biography is crowded with memorials of God's seal on the patient piety of praying mothers. John Randolph declared, "I believe I should have been swept away by the flood of French infidelity, if it had not been for one thing—the remembrance of the time when my sainted mother used to make me kneel by her side, taking my little hands folded in hers, and cause me to repeat the Lord's Prayer." One of our Western missionaries states that, during a revival in his field, a scoffing infidel was at length brought to his knees, and the first cry that burst from his quivering lips was, "God of my mother, have mercy upon me."

Hence we have, in these first appearances, a presentation of the mission of woman. She is first to utter to the opening soul the story of the cross, and utter it in tones which, though earliest heard, are latest

forgotten and effaced. This story is first heard, not from the pulpit, the press, or the lips of man, but from the lips of woman, in the sweet cradle-hymns that soothe the young nursling to sleep, as the mother sings, "Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber;" in the simple songs of the nursery, when the lisping tongue of childhood is taught to say, "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me;" in the story of that babe of Bethlehem, cradled in the manger, and that gentle and crucified man of Calvary, whose sufferings make the young lip to quiver and the eye to fill, with such deep emotion; and in those musings of heaven that fill the child's heart, as it learns that Jesus has there tenderly folded the little babe that died, and that in that bright home above the stars there is no night, no sorrow, and no tears. These are the deep, indellible tracings of holy things on the human heart. The boy may become wayward, and the man wicked—he may learn to scoff at religion, and grow hoary in sin—but let an hour of sickness or sorrow come upon him, and the world grow dark, and then, like the image of an angel, there will rise in his heart the vision of his mother; he will remember the time when her soft hand was laid on his head as he knelt beside her in prayer; he will remember when that hand, then thin and pale, was laid feebly, but fondly, in his, as, with her dying lips, she commended her boy to God, and prayed that she might meet him in heaven; and, in those hours of solemn and tender memories, the hard heart will melt, and the unbidden tears will gush from the eyes of the most obdurate, at the sweet remembrance of a mother's love, and a mother's piety.

The mission, then, of mother, wife, and sister, is one of high and solemn import, and one the neglect of which must draw after it fearful guilt. If she tells those who ought to learn from her of Christ, the wretched babble of worldliness and sin, and leads them not to the fountain that flows from the riven rock, but the broad, deep, rushing current of worldliness, her guilt must be heavy indeed. It is a fearful crime for a Hindoo mother to bring her child and commit him to the waters of the Ganges; but the worldly and godless mother, with a deadlier cruelty, brings her child to a stream whose end is in the abyss that is bottomless. Hence it becomes us to remember, as soon as we see the women hastening to tell first the news of a risen Redeemer, that we have here presented to us what is woman's mission still, to be the earliest to tell to the opening soul the story of a Saviour.

"RECEIVE MY SPIRIT."

BY THE REV. JOHN HOWE.

THIS happy accord, the willingness of the departing soul, should proceed not from stupidity, but trust in him who keeps these keys ; and from such preparedness for removal as the gospel requires. O happy souls ! that finding the key is turning, and opening the door for them, are willing to go forth upon such terms, as, "knowing whom they have believed," &c., and that neither "principalities nor powers, nor life, nor death, can ever separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus their Lord." Life, they find, hath not separated whereof was the greater danger ; and death is so far from making this separation, that it shall complete their union with the blessed God in Christ, and lay them enfolded in the everlasting embraces of divine love ! Happy soul ! here will be a speedy end to all thy griefs and sorrows ; they will be presently swallowed up in fulness of joy. There is already an end put to thy tormenting cares and fears, when once thou art reconciled to death ? This is the most glorious sort of victory—namely, by *reconciliation*. For so, thou hast conquered, not the enemy only, but the enmity itself, by which he was so. Death is become thy friend, and so no longer to be feared ; nor is there anything else, from whence thou art to fear hurt ; for death was thy last enemy, even this bodily death. The whole region beyond it is, to one in thy case, clear and serene, when to others is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

O the transports of joy that do now most rationally result from this state of the case, when there is nothing left between the dislodging soul and the glorious unseen world, but only the dark passage of death, and that so little formidable, considering who hath the keys of the one and the other !

We must, it is true, be absent from these bodies, or we cannot as we would, be present with the Lord. And is that all ? Can anything now be more certain than that ? O happy state of our case ! How should our hearts spring and leap for joy, that our affairs are brought into this posture ; that in order to our perfect blessedness, nothing is farther wanting but to die ; and that the certainty of death completes our assurance of it ! How gloriously may good men triumph over the impotent malice of their most mischievous enemies, because the greatest mischief they can ever do them, is to put it out of their own power to hurt them any more ; for

they now go quite out of their reach. They can (being permitted) kill the body, and *after that* have no more that they can do (Luke xii. 4). What a remarkably significant "*after that*" is this! what a defiance doth it import of the utmost effort of human power and spite, that here it terminates!

And thus we are to look upon all our other trials and afflictions, that in any providential way may befall us; we may be sick, in pain, in poverty, in disgrace, but we shall not be always in mortal flesh, which is the occasion of all the rest. Can we be upon better terms, having but two things to be concerned about, as necessary to our complete felicity—union with Christ, and disunion with these bodies? God is graciously ready to assist us in reference to the former, though he requires our care and exertion; in reference to the latter, he will take care himself, in his own fit season, without any care or concern of ours in the matter; and only expects us to wait with patience till that fit season come. And come it will, perhaps sooner than we may think.

DO YOU MEAN IT?

BY REV. JAMES SMITH, CHELTENHAM.

SOMETIME ago I heard two friends in conversation, and the one was expressing strong affection for the other; at length the other replied with deep emotion, "*Do you mean it?*" Oh, thought I, nothing will do, I see, but sincerity. It is not enough to talk about love, the question is, "*Do you mean it?*" Lip love is of small value, no wise man esteems it. When a profession of love is made, the spirit is observed, and the conduct is watched, to see that the spirit and conduct agree with the tongue. Sincere love is valuable; but love in talk only is of small importance. Whenever I hear persons professing attachment, I will henceforth think of the question, "*Do you mean it?*" But my thoughts run further than this. I thought that if man may put such a question to his fellow-men, how much more may the Lord Jesus put the question to us all. We often sing—

"Jesus, I love thy charming name,
 'Tis music to my ear;
 Then would I sound it out so loud,
 That earth and heaven should hear."

"Do we mean this?" Then we shall take every opportunity to speak of Jesus. We shall talk of him to our children. We shall tell our neighbours of his love. Every one of our relatives will hear of him from us. Nor shall we be satisfied with speaking once or twice, but we shall speak until we get them interested, and try to engage them in the work. Nor will our communications be cold or formal, but there will be some excitement about us, like that produced by music; like that felt when we speak of what we have greatly enjoyed, or of that in which we are deeply and intensely interested. Yes, yes, if the name of Jesus is like music to the ear; if we heartily desire that earth and heaven may hear it, we shall speak of it, and speak as if we meant every word too. Now, if we often sing, or repeat this verse, and yet seldom or never speak of Jesus to recommend him to others, and to exalt his love, may he not well ask, as my friend did, *"Do you mean it?"* Again, we say—

"Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust;
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust."

What does our conduct say? Does it say, that we consider gold as sordid dust, in compare with Jesus? Are our thoughts of Jesus, and our preference of Jesus to gold as great as our preference of gold to the dust in the street? Is this the case? We say so, do we not? and we say so often too; for this is one of our favourite hymns. O beloved, how much pretence there is about us! How much more we often say than we feel, and how often we feel more than we embody in practice. When gold is preferred to the word of Jesus, to the ordinances of Jesus, to private fellowship and communion with Jesus, is there not some reason to doubt if we do not, at least for the time, prefer gold to Jesus? When the mind is more given to the getting of gold, or to the preserving and improving our property, than to know and make known the Lord Jesus through the week, if, on the Lord's-day we sing this beautiful hymn, may not the Saviour point with his finger to our conduct in the week and ask, *"Do you mean it?"*

Once more we sing—

"I'll speak the honours of thy name,
With my last labouring breath;
Then speechless clasp thee in mine arms,
The antidote of death."

Is this likely? If we do not speak of Jesus while we can speak with ease and freedom, is it likely that we shall make an effort to speak of him, when effort gives us great pain. Oh, if we do, may not our Lord well say to us, "Why did you not speak of me, when you were in health and strength? I gave you plenty of opportunities, and you could speak freely and fluently on almost every other subject, why did you not speak of me then? You said, you wished heaven and earth to hear my name—you said I was far more precious to you than jewels or fine gold—that I was your transport and your trust—but you could talk of gold and jewels much more freely and frequently than you did of me; and if, on any occasion I was spoken of by you, few would suppose from your manner or expressions, that I was your transport and your trust."

Beloved, are we not verily guilty? Must we not confess that we have been false, fickle, and inconsistent? When we make our warmest professions of love and attachment, has not our Saviour much cause to ask, "*Do you mean it?*" Well, perhaps, we do mean it at the time, but our feelings, like Ephraim's goodness, are as the morning cloud and early dew, soon dried up and gone. Alas, that it should be so. But so it is. O Saviour, send, we beseech thee, the spirit of love into our hearts, that we may love thee with a pure heart fervently; and enable us so to speak of thee to all about us, and so to act in the world, in the family, and in the church, that all may be convinced that we do love thee in deed and in truth. Holy Spirit direct our hearts into the love of Jesus, and shed abroad his love in our hearts that we may love him with all power; and let our words and works say, that he is to us the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely! O to love Jesus really and truly, deeply and habitually, and to show our love to him, by speaking and writing of him, by dedicating ourselves to him, and by daily acting for him in all ranks of life.

HINTS FOR THE LORD'S DAY.

First. Get your children to settle it in their minds never, *never to rob God and themselves of the Sabbath.*

If he requires us to keep it, we may be confident that it is our *interest* to do so. It is a law of nature, and to expect to trifle with it with impunity is as if we expected to take fire into our bosoms and not to be

burned, or to leap from a precipice and not get broken bones. Common sense, therefore, no less than submission to God, should bring us to such a decision in our earliest years.

Secondly. Get your children *to make their Sabbaths cheerful*. Let them understand that gloom is as inappropriate to the day as giddiness or work is. It is a day for gladness of heart. They should walk with a lighter step, their eyes should beam smiles, and no lark in the sky should sing more blithely. The service at church, the hour of Sunday school, the reading or talking at home—all these should be steeped in the spirit of grateful praise to God, who, in raising Jesus from the dead, as on this day, has given us “beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning.”

Lastly. Get your children *to make use of the Sabbath*. Convince them that it is the time for mind-and-heart-and-soul-culture: now the ground is softest, the sunshine warmest, the dews heaviest. Ho! then for the seed-sowing! Ho! then for the digging, and pruning, and loosening! This is *holy* work—Sabbath work—“The Sabbath was made for man” in this sense. As soon as ever your children have learned to *improve* the day,—to turn it to practical account,—as soon as ever they feel that they have something to do in it, and that they are really doing it, you have insured their “Remembering it to keep it holy” for life.

TEN GOLDEN RULES.

1. NEVER put off till to-morrow what ought to be done to-day.
2. Never trouble others for what you can do yourself.
3. Never spend your money before you have it.
4. Never buy what you do not want, because it is cheap.
5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, or cold.
6. We never repent of having eaten too little.
7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.
8. How much pain have those evils cost us which never happened.
9. Take things always by their smooth handle.
10. When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, count a hundred.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

SIMEON.

A Sermon

BY THE REV. NEHEMIAH ADAMS, D.D.

PASTOR OF THE ESSEX STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.

"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ."—Luke ii. 25, 26.

THOUGH the world that was made by him knew him not, there were those who, by the Spirit of God, were moved to honour and welcome the Redeemer, at his entrance upon earth.

One of the first that we read of was an aged man, distinguished for the uprightness and piety of his life, by the name of Simeon. It is nowhere asserted that he was an old man, but when we find that a passage of Scripture, and especially a narrative, has made a certain impression, we should be slow to call it in question; for we may suppose that the Bible has had, among its millions of readers, minds as shrewd and critical as any at the present day.

Though the old age of Simeon is nowhere asserted, it may be easily inferred from the brief account of him before us. It was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's Christ. This makes the impression that, in the course of nature, he had reason to be expecting death, and that a special exemption from it had been assured to him until he should see Christ; so that when he saw him, he regarded it as the sign of his speedy departure from the world, which he would not have done had there not been reason, in his condition, to feel that his continuance in life was not long to be expected.

We may, therefore, regard him as an old man, and full of days, with those infirmities and sorrows which are peculiar to advanced years; and yet, in the midst of them, there was an earnest hope and expectation to see that promised Lord, and this desire was like a staff to him while he daily waited for the tidings of the Saviour's birth, which his own great age, and the near approach of death, in the natural order of things, convinced him could not be far off.

He was "a just man," of blameless life, "a devout man," living under the influence of religious contemplations, and performing his duties to God, in public and private, with sincerity and in an exemplary manner,

He "waited for the consolation of Israel." The prophets had spoken of the Saviour's birth as an event that would bring great consolation with it to the hearts of all who loved God. Thus Isaiah, predicting the coming Messiah,

said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God." "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, for the Lord hath comforted his people." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, had spoken in the same manner, and Zechariah, so near to the time of Christ, had said, "For the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." The modern Jews speak of the days of the Messiah, whom they still expect, as the days of consolation; and a form of oath among them is this: "I swear by my desire of seeing the consolation." When we call to mind how kings and prophets had desired to see the times of Christ, but died without the sight, how the glowing rhapsodies of Isaiah, and the revelations made to Daniel, with regard to Messiah's kingdom, had excited the national mind, while those who had correct spiritual views of the Redeemer had associated him with the forgiveness of sins, through faith in the blood which was to abolish the ceremonial law, and speak that peace to the guilty conscience which types and forms could do only by a borrowed power, we can easily suppose that the desire to see Christ was a most intense desire, combining all the patriotic feeling, and the love of liberty, and the hope of deliverance from the Roman power; and also in some, like Simeon, the more spiritual expectation of coming nearer to God than by the help of altars and slain beasts; as the prophet had said: "But he is wounded for our transgressions, he is bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace is upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." To see that which Abraham, their great ancestor, desired to see, and of which, by faith, he had a distinct idea presented to his mind, and was glad; to see him whom great Aaron typified, but before whom Aaron must resign his mitre and his breastplate; to look on him that was greater than Moses, bringing grace and truth instead of a broken and fiery law; to see him who was David's Lord, and yet David's son,—this expectation surpassed all that we can imagine, and, as the time drew near, the desire must have risen to intensity.

This aged Simeon feared that he should close his eyes in death before that day should dawn and that day-star arise in his heart. How we sometimes long to live that we may behold certain things which, if we are in heaven, we shall enjoy as fully, and, indeed, more perfectly, than here! And yet we feel that to see those things in our day, among the living, to share in the joy of others in beholding the fulfilment of a promise or hope, will comfort our last hours, gently break our hold on life, and make us more willing to die. God had graciously condescended to grant the desires of Simeon, in this particular, and the time drew near.

One day he "came by the Spirit into the temple," moved by a divine impulse to repair to the house of God, no doubt to perform his devotions. God had ordered it that, at that moment, the parents of Jesus should bring him in for the rite of circumcision. There the disclosure was made to this aged man that his desire was fulfilled: "The Lord whom ye seek" has "suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in, behold, he is come, saith the Lord of hosts."

No doubt some divine communication was made to the mind of Simeon at that time; for we are told that the Holy Ghost was upon him, so that he was inspired to know who the child was, and to utter the predictions which followed. "Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God."

See now the heart of the old man, long buffeting with infirmity and the signs of approaching dissolution. He speaks, first of all, concerning the laying down of the load of life, with that desire gratified which alone had made life tolerable. "Lord," he says, "now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Come, death, so long waiting for me; I have nothing more to live for; my hopes and wishes are fulfilled, for I have seen the Lord's Christ. I leave the world with the Messiah born into it. My people, my kindred, ye Gentile nations, your Saviour has come. Farewell.

The act of the venerable old man in the temple, evidently under the influence of a prophetic spirit, must, of course, have astonished the parents of Christ. "And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him." "Mine eyes," he said, "have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." To the simple, humble parents of the child, these solemn words, and, no doubt, the most impressive and affecting appearance of the old man, holding the child in his arms, and pouring out utterances of prophetic ecstasy, were more than they could comprehend, notwithstanding the wonders attending his conception and birth. But, to their marvel, the holy seer replied with other words no less surprising. "And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother," (how much nature there is in speaking to the mother about the child, rather than to the father,) "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

The brief history of this aged worshipper of the child Jesus, as well as his words of significant import, furnish much instruction. The object of these discourses, as already stated, is to illustrate the faith and love of which Christ has been the object, and thereby to encourage and quicken our faith and love, and, if need be, to remove the coldness of our affections.

I. Simeon is an example to us of faith in Christ, and of strong affection towards him.

Is this the promised Messiah, this the babe in the arms of a poor woman of Bethlehem, her husband bearing in his basket "a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons," unable to bring the usual offering of a lamb, but availing himself of the alternative offering prescribed for the poor? What a sight is this! What an entrance into the world, if this be the Messiah! Does this meet and fulfil Isaiah's vision, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace?" Is this "the desire of nations," "the Lord whom ye seek," "even the messenger of the covenant?" Is this "the King of the Jews?" this "the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts?" What faith Simeon must have had, to believe the simple word of God in the face of all the disparaging and contradictory circumstances of that child.

But perhaps we are tempted to say, No wonder that he believed, notwithstanding all these unfavourable circumstances; for he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and so was led, by a secret impulse upon his mind, to feel that that child was the Messiah.

And it is so easy to believe under strong impressions, when everything that

is circumstantial discourages faith? How is it with us? We have a persuasion that certain doctrines are taught in Scripture, but there is opposition to them. Some treat them with scorn, and, what is worse, we cannot explain the mysteries in them, and must confess that they are above reason. Do we still embrace the truth, as Simeon did the child Jesus, and say, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation?"

We have a strong persuasion, confirmed by observation, that we ought, without delay, to make our peace with God. By impressions upon our minds, as strong as can be made consistently with our freedom, the Holy Ghost says "To-day, after so long a time, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." But our companions entice us, the world charms us, pleasure sings with enchanting voice, alluring us to fancied future joys, which we feel we must obtain before we give our hearts to God, and procrastination promises a future time for repentance; and so we pass heedless by opening graves and alarming providences, and stop our ears against conscience and the Bible, and put our souls in jeopardy for that endless duration after death. Is it easy to obey strong impulses made upon our feelings? Are these admonitions of the Holy Ghost never resisted? Is faith the most natural and obvious thing with these hearts of ours? Let us be reproved and rebuked by this example of the aged saint in the temple. I say, this aged saint; for the days of credulity with him had passed away. Old people are slow to believe new things. They shake their heads at the sanguine hopes and the ready acquiescence of the young in promising enterprises and pretended recent discoveries. The frost of many winters had extinguished the natural ardours of this old man, and for him the sun and the light, and the moon and the stars, were darkened, and the clouds returned after the rain. He was afraid of that which is high, and fears were in his way, and the almond-tree flourished, and desire failed, for it was time that he should go to his long home, and for the mourners to go about the streets.

We must agree, then, that, in his circumstances, his faith was a great triumph over unfavourable appearances; indeed, there could not possibly be less to encourage faith than at the moment when he took that child to his arms. Had he the heart of Naaman the Syrian, who went away in a rage from the prophet's door, because he was told to go and wash in Jordan, instead of receiving a cure from the prophet with ceremonious application of his hand to the leprosy, Simeon might have turned away offended, saying, Is this root out of dry ground my Saviour? Where did he find in that humble scene anything to gratify his fancy, anything answering to those pictures with which imagination, perhaps, had filled his mind, while expecting the Lord's Christ? And have I waited for this? is this what Abraham desired to see? is this David's Lord and David's son? is this the burden of Isaiah? There is no beauty in him that I should desire him. It must have been the purest and the strongest faith that made that aged saint feel and act as he did. Love mingled with it, and made his faith perfect; and so faith, working by love, purified his heart from all those worldly, pompous, and merely Jewish feelings which would have made him despise the infant Messiah. Perhaps he subjected himself to the wonder, if not to the scoffs, of bystanders, taking a young child out of the arms of his mother, a stranger to him, and uttering such words of worship, such unintelligible words—"Mine eyes have seen thy salvation;" "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Blessed saint, we need, and would emulate, thy faith and love. To the world around us Christ yet has no form nor comeliness, and when they see him there is no beauty in him that they should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men. He requires a cross daily of each of his followers. He bids them lay aside resentments, and lusts, and covetousness, which is idolatry, and all worldliness, and to be heavenly minded, and to learn of him who is meek and lowly in heart, that they may find rest unto their souls. Our hearts are slow to take all this to our arms and to our bosoms. We need Simeon's faith and Simeon's love to make us embrace Jesus Christ, with his soul-humblings doctrines and precepts, as he is offered to us in the gospel, and, regardless of the frowns and favours of men, say, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." We need to be absorbed more in promoting the cause of that Saviour whom Simeon declared to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel." What zeal that good man would have had for the conversion of the world, had he lived in our day. He would have had no rest till every fellow-creature had, by faith and love, seen and embraced the Lord's Christ.

We will make use of Simeon's words to the mother of our Lord for further instruction. We may derive this admonition from the scene before us in the temple.

II. *If we dedicate our children to God, we must be prepared to have them suffer great things for the salvation of men.*

All Christian parents dedicate their children to God. The forms in which they do it vary, but the consecration of children to the service of God is one of the most natural, as it is a solemn and affecting, duty, and is felt to be a great privilege by pious parents, whether it be attended with a public offering of the children in a religious assembly, or not. When we consecrate our children to God, we must reckon, upon great sacrifices and trials, if God will, in their history.

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, and said, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured among women; the Lord is with thee." Mary afterward exclaimed, in the joy and fulness of her heart, "Henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Her child grew in stature, and in favour with God and man, and, at length, entered upon his public ministry. Her thoughts and feelings as a mother, as she heard of his mighty works, his opening the eyes and the ears, and loosing the tongue, and feeding the multitudes, and walking on the sea, and raising the dead, and casting out devils, and healing the sick, can better be imagined than described. These feelings, however, were mixed with other feelings, as she perceived how the chief priests and rulers of the people conspired against him to take his life.

Can we suppose that there never were any of those interviews between them, which a good son, though grown to manhood, loves to have with the mother that bare him? Did he never retreat from the world to her humble dwelling, and tell her of his joys and sorrows; the mighty work which God had given him to do; the toil and pain which marked his daily life; the thronging multitudes and the insidious Pharisee; the love and joy of the Magdalene, and Bartimeus, and the envy and subtle craftiness of the sanhedrim? How did she feel, as she looked upon the marks which care and toil had made upon that child of hers, the object of such wonder in her secret meditations—for such marks his life of sorrow had made—"his visage was so marred more

than any man's, and his form more than the sons of men." What did that mother want, when she stood without, with his brethren, desiring to speak with him? She saw that things were coming to a crisis with him; her heart was burdened, on his behalf, with a heavy load; all the mother's solicitude, and conscious right to interfere, made her eager to withdraw him from destruction: but her grief swelled like a mountain torrent when she heard that he was betrayed; and where was she, and what were her thoughts and feelings, when the scenes of his mock trial passed on, and he was finally condemned to be crucified? and what sword was that which passed through her own soul also, as she, with the omnipotent energy of a mother's love, stood by and saw him take his place between two thieves, to expire on the accursed tree, as a public malefactor? For we read in John, "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother."—Enough—no matter who else were there—his mother! O God, our heavenly Father, to what baptisms of sufferings we are called in this world, and how wonderful is that grace which sustains poor creatures like us, under loads which would crush angels, without thine everlasting arm. His mother saw him die—his widowed mother, as we must conclude she was, for the beloved disciple took her thenceforth to his own home. "Hail, thou that art highly favoured among women," some one at the cross, instigated by the power of darkness, may have whispered, mocking, through her, as she stood by her expiring son, the pretensions of Jesus, and, with him, the fabulous story of his pretended miraculous birth, in the circulation of which she, of course, was implicated. How is it now with thee, oh woman? from henceforth shall all generations call thee blessed? Oh, sad reward of faith and hope! We will not wonder to hear thee echo thy Son's dying cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But it was for this, though she knew it not, that, in his infancy, she dedicated him to God.

Could you foresee that God would make that little child of yours an instrument of great good, by means of suffering and a dreadful death, would you shrink to consecrate it, by prayer and vows, to God? Dear Christian parents, what an honour it is to have children whom God shall count worthy to suffer for his name's sake. Indifferent servants of God are not selected for this high honour; they are not "counted worthy to suffer;" but God seeks those who, by nature and grace (both his gift), are capable of great endurance, superior to the frowns and flatteries of the world, willing to be cast out and trodden under foot by feet that have also trodden under foot the Son of God, ready to suffer the loss of all things, able to bear martyrdom, and to endure unto the end. When we consecrate our children to God, let us fancy that we hear him say to us, Are ye able that the child shall drink of the cup that I drank of, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith I was baptized? Let us say, By thy grace, Lord, we are able. We ask not for them length of days, nor riches, nor favour, nor pleasure, nor to sit on thy right hand and on thy left in thy kingdom, but that thou wilt qualify them and employ them to serve thee, wherever and in whatever way thou shalt appoint. Then, should we hear even that they are devoured by cannibals whom they go to save, we shall say, Had I now a hundred children, I would give them all to Christ, if he would employ them. The reward is great in heaven; and not only so, but in this world also a "hundred-fold."

It was so with the mother of Jesus. Weeping endured for a night, but joy came in the morning.

What were her feelings when they told her, Thy son liveth ! when she looked into the deserted sepulchre ; when Jesus met her ; when she stood with him in Olivet, " all power given unto " him " in heaven and on earth," and saw him ascend to his throne in heaven. " Hail, thou that art highly favoured among women ; all generations shall call thee blessed." If she wished for consolation, and were capable of pride, what must her feelings be at the worship paid her by the millions of the Papal and Greek churches, by kings and nobles, by the imaginative young devotees of nunneries, who make her their patron saint ;—" our lady," " ora pro nobis," " miserere," and all that incense of worship—what reward has she in this, if that could be reward, for all she suffered ? Without question, however, it is a sword that is fitted to pierce her more than the nails and spear of her Son's cross, to hear herself worshipped ; every " ora pro nobis," every bended knee, every votive offering made to her, is an affliction beyond endurance. were it not that in heaven God wipes away all tears from her eyes.

Let us consecrate our children to God, and pray that the holy child Jesus will own them as his servants ; then, if they have a fellowship with him in suffering, or serve him amid the temptations and trials of prosperity and ease, to them to live will be Christ ; and when they meet in heaven, there will be an " over-payment of delight " in saying of them, beloved and honoured of Christ, Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me.

III. *The words of Simeon, with regard to Christ, teach us that Christ is the great test of human character.*

" Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

So it came to pass in his day. Some, by means of him, fell, as it were, over a stumbling stone, into perdition. The chief priests and scribes ; the amiable young ruler ; the man who wished to go and bid them farewell that were at home at his house ; those who, on a certain occasion, went away, and walked no more with him,—these were tried as to their secret thoughts and characters, and were found wanting. While, on the other hand, Simeon, and John the Baptist, and the Eleven, and thousands of the poor and humble, found him to be the Saviour that they needed, for he was meek and lowly in heart, and they were poor in spirit, and theirs was the kingdom of heaven. So they built their hopes upon him for eternity.

Christ is a touchstone to every one of us. What think ye of Christ ? is a question whose answer decides the truth or error of our belief. If he be to you only a creature, however exalted, superangelic, but still a creature, your views of the character of God, and of your own character, and of the way to be saved, and of future retribution, must be wrong. If Christ is God, and you worship him, and he made atonement for your sins, this affects the whole character of your belief. " He that hath the Son hath life ; " " Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." So with regard to our secret thoughts and our character ; tell us how you feel toward Christ, and we will tell you whether you are a Christian, and, if a Christian, what sort of Christian ; for this depends on our feelings toward him whose character and whose relation to us, as a Saviour, were intended to affect the human heart more intensely than anything else. And such is the case. There are no feelings so intense as the feelings which Christ awakens, for or against himself. There was Julian the Apostate, who, falling in battle,

seized a handful of sand and flung it toward the sky, saying, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean." Dying Stephen, heedless of the shower of stones, cries, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Some are never greatly excited to anger, except by religion; Christ brings no peace to their homes, but a sword. In contrast with them, there are those to whom the name of Christ is music, and they are most happy when they are accounted worthy to do anything for him, and for those who love him. Each of us may just see what we are, by our feelings toward Christ: if we are indifferent, we are opposed to him; we dislike his spiritual character and precepts, and the way to be saved through him. If we love him, we are loved of his Father also. As a proof of all this, we have only to consider that last, dread sentence which Christ says he will pronounce, with the reasons on which it is based: Inasmuch as ye did it, or did it not, to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it or did it not, to me. And what follows? "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Are my feelings toward Christ, indicated by my treatment of those who love him, to settle the question where I shall spend eternity? Let me see to it, that I think of Christ, and feel toward him, as the Word of God requires.

The words of Simeon, as he took the infant Saviour in his arms, suggest one more remark, which is properly deduced from his feelings and expressions.

IV. *We are reminded, by Simeon's experience, that a sight of Christ makes death easy.*

There is, most commonly, an effort with the dying to be assured of the favour of Christ; and that willingness to die, which so often changes the views and feelings of those who are approaching the grave, is owing, in most cases, to an increased sense of the Saviour's presence. For such purposes, among others, he became flesh, that we, in the hour of weakness and death, might apprehend him, as we cannot apprehend the infinite God. The presence of Christ makes death easy. He comes, and finishes his redeeming work with the believer, at death, and the sight of him makes the Christian willing to depart; and not only willing, but frequently he says, to depart and be with Christ is far better. Simeon, with Christ in his embrace, longing to die, is a good emblem of a believer on his dying bed, when Christ, whose friend he has been, reveals himself as his Friend.

We, who preach to you, would love, as dying men, to take each of you by the hand, and say, Dear friend, you and we must have a dying bed. We know not how soon we shall find ourselves upon it. There the friendship and the presence of Christ is everything; no matter what your pains are, or whom you are called to part with, the presence of Christ will make death easy. Are you a friend of Christ? When you come to die, may you claim him as a friend, by reason of your friendship to him? To have him shew himself to us while the shadows fall between us and time, and to have him whisper, Fear not, for I am with thee, is worth more than a life of sinful pleasure. Be a friend of Christ, in your youth, in your prime, in your advanced years, in your declining age. Many a time he will make you feel that he is your Friend, and that promise shall be yours: "And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."

Sketches and Essays.

THE CHILD IS DEAD.

BY THE REV. S. I. PRIME.

It is hard to believe it—that we shall no more hear that glad voice, nor meet the merry laugh that burst so often from his glad heart.

Child as he was, he was a pleasant child, and to the partial parent there are traits of loveliness that no other eye may see. It was a wise ordering of Providence that we should love our own children as no one else loves them, and as we love the children of none besides. And ours was a lovely child.

But the child is dead. You may put away his playthings. Put them where they will be safe. I would not like to have them broken or lost; and you need not lend them to other children when they come to see us. It would pain me to see them in other hands, much as I love to see children happy with their toys.

His clothes you may lay aside; I shall often look them over, and each of the colours that he wore will remind me of him as he looked when he was here. I shall weep often when I think of him; but there is a luxury in thinking of the one that is gone, which I would not part with for the world. I think of my child now, a child always, though an angel among angels.

The child is dead. The eye has lost its lustre. The hand is still and cold. His little heart is not beating now. How pale he looks! Yet the very form is dear to me. Every lock of his hair, every feature of the face, is a treasure that I shall prize the more, as the months of my sorrow come and go.

Lay the little one in his coffin. He was never in so cold and hard a bed; but he will feel it not. He would not know it, if he had been laid in his cradle, or in his mother's arms. Throw a flower or two by his side: like them he withered.

Carry him out to the grave. Gently! It is a hard road this to the grave. Every jar seems to disturb the infant sleeper. Here we are at

the brink of the sepulchre. Oh, how damp, and dark, and cold ! But the dead do not feel it. There is no pain, no fear, no weeping there. Sleep on now, and take your rest.

Fill it up ! Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Every clod seems to fall on my heart. Every smothered sound from the grave is saying, Gone, gone, gone ! It is full now. Lay the turf gently over the dear child. Plant a myrtle among the sods, and let the little one sleep among the trees and flowers. Our child is not there. His dust, precious dust, indeed is there, but our child is in heaven. He is not here ; he is risen.

I shall think of the form that is mouldering here among the dead ; and it will be a mournful comfort to come at times and think of the child that was once the light of our house, and the idol—ah ! that I must own the secret of this sorrow—the idol of my heart.

And it is beyond all language to express the joy, in the midst of tears, I feel, that my sin, in making an idol of the child, has not made that infant less dear to Jesus. Nay, there is even something that tells me the Saviour called the darling from me, that I might love the Saviour more when I had one child less on earth to love. He knoweth our frame ; he knows the way to win and bind us. Dear Saviour, as thou hast my lamb, give *me*, too, a place in thy bosom. Set me as a seal on thy heart.

And now let us go back to the house. It is strangely changed. It is silent and cheerless, gloomy even. When did I enter this door without the greeting of those lips and eyes, that I shall greet no more ? Can the absence of but one produce so great a change so soon ? When one of the children was away on a visit, we did not feel the absence as we do now. That was for a time ; this is for ever ! He will not return. Hark ! I thought for a moment it was the child, but it was only my own heart's yearning for the lost. He will not come again.

.

Such thoughts as these have been the thoughts of many in the season of their first grief.

As heart answereth to heart, there is a wondrous likeness in the sorrow of parents over the death of their little ones. The rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant are alike, when they sit by the side of their babes in the struggles of death ; and when they follow them to the grave their hearts are true to nature, and nature mourns when the loved are torn away.

One of the iron sort of men, a man of war, sent for me to come and

see him in his affliction. His child, a sweet girl of three or four years only, had been taken with the croup, and died before medical relief could be obtained. He met me in his hall, and fell on my neck, and wept like a child. I had never seen him weep before. I had never thought that such a man as he had tears to shed. And I do not know that he would have wept had the pestilence or the sword swept off all the rest of those whom he loved, and spared the infant that had nestled in his bosom.

If this is a weakness of those who have never tasted the cup, I am sure that none of them will be offended with these words, for they will not read them till they are weeping too. To be a brother in sorrow, you must have suffered. Even the Lord of heaven had to become a man, that he might, by his experience, learn to bear our sorrows. And then he wept with those who wept.

Some time ago, I was at the funeral of the child of a pastor, and when the neighbouring minister, who had been called upon to bury his brother's child, had closed his words of sympathy and comfort, the stricken father said to those present: "When I have sought to minister to your consolation in the times of your affliction, weeping with you over your dying children, you have often said to me that I knew nothing of the anguish, and could not sympathize with you in your loss. I feel it now. I never did before." And then he pointed them to the sources of comfort that God was opening to his soul, and asked them to come to the fountain and drink. The house in which we were then assembled stood on a hill-side, overlooking a beautiful river, and, on the other side of it "sweet fields stood drest in living green." The pastor went on to say—and there was a strange power and beauty, too, in the words as they fell from his lips in the midst of tears—"Often, as I have stood on the borders of this stream, and looked over to the fair fields on the other side, I have felt but little interest in the people or the place in full view before me. The river separates me from them, and my thoughts and affections were here. But a few months ago, one of my children moved across to the other side, and took up his residence there. Since that time, my heart has been there also. In the morning, when I rise and look out towards the east, I think of my child who is over there, and again and again through the day I think of him, and the other side of the river is always in my thoughts with the child who is gone there to dwell. And now, since another of my children has crossed the river of death, and has gone to dwell on the other side, my heart is drawn out toward heaven and the inhabitants of heaven as it was never drawn before. I supposed that

heaven was dear to me; that my Father was there, and my friends were there, and that I had a great interest in heaven,—but I *had no child there!* Now I have; and I never think, and never shall think of heaven, but with the memory of that dear child who is to be among its inhabitants for ever."

It was a beautiful and impressive illustration. The heart of the father was soothed by thoughts like these. He loved to look away to heaven, and think of it as the abode of his child, a seraph now, happier far than he could be in this vale of tears, and happier than he could ever have been, had he lived to grow up to manhood, to die, it might be, in sin.

Standing by the coffin of one whom he most tenderly loved, and for whom he would have died a thousand deaths, Fénelon cried:

"There he lies, and all my worldly happiness lies dead with him. But if the turning of a straw would call him back to life, I would not for ten thousand worlds be the turner of that straw, in opposition to the will of God?"

"I have had six children," said Mr. Eliot, "and I bless God for his free grace, they are all with Christ, or in Christ; and my mind is now at rest concerning them. My desire was that they should have served Christ on earth; but if God will choose to have them serve him in heaven, I have nothing to object to it. His will be done."

Yes, I will say so likewise; His will be done. It is the best and wisest will; and though it does darken all my prospects, and disappoint a thousand cherished hopes, I know that he who has done it doeth all things well. I can trust him for this, as I have never trusted him yet, and found his promises fail.

"I sincerely sympathize with you," says Dr. Erskine to a friend who had lost an only son, "in your heavy trial. I have drunk deep of the same cup: of *nine sons*, only one survives. From what I have repeatedly felt, I can form an idea of what you must feel. I cannot, I dare not say, Weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely he allows you to weep. But oh, let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not how this shall work for your good; but it is enough that God knows. He that said, 'All things shall work together for good to them that love God,' excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you cannot doubt that he accepted the surrender. If he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his be-

half, was spiritual and heavenly blessings. If the greatest thing you wished for is accomplished, at the season and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted. You know not what work and what joy have been waiting for him in the other world."

An old tombstone bears this epitaph, and one might think an angel whispers it to a mourning mother's ear :—

" Weep not, my mother, weep not ; I am blest,
But must leave heaven if I *come to thee* ;
For I am where the weary are at rest,
The wicked cease from troubling. *Come to me !*"

FAMILY RELIGION.

THE family is the cradle of religion. The first *altar* was the *family altar* ; the first form of worship was *family worship*. More than once the worship of the true God was limited to a single family, and for centuries it was perpetuated through the families of Abraham and his descendants.

The family is a peculiar institution ; it is a *church* and a *state* in miniature. Like political governments, every well-organised family has its ruler or head ; it has its code of laws, which all its subjects ought to obey. It has its discipline and its penalties. Like the *church*, every religious family has its sanctuary and means of grace. It has its set times for devotion ; its seasons of prayer and praise.

A minister who was sympathising with a woman who lived at a great distance from sanctuary privileges, was surprised to hear her say, she was not destitute of the means of grace. "I have," said she, "a Bible and a family of children. I read and pray with them morning and evening ; I read a sermon on the Sabbath, and we sing and pray ; on the evening of the weekly meeting, we do the same, lifting up our hearts and voices with others all over the world ; I feel that I am not destitute of the means of grace."

The immense moral and religious *power* of the family is but imperfectly realised ; seldom appreciated. It may be said to be the mighty engine for good or evil in the world. In many families, there is an opportunity of exhibiting the "beauty of holiness," in almost every relation in life ; where almost every Divine precept is obeyed or disobeyed. Here are husbands and wives ; parents and children ; brothers and sisters ; the hoary head of age and helpless infancy ; the master and

servant ; the maid and her mistress ; the rich and the poor. For every one of these relations there is a positive duty ; to each one who sustains them there is a divine command.

What an opportunity to live religion. Where should "the light so shine as to glorify our Father in heaven," if not here ? *Here* the mask is dropped ; here the real character is exhibited ; here we are "living epistles, known and read" by each other. Here our honesty is acknowledged, or hypocrisy detected ; here motives are weighed, and *principles* stand out in bold relief. Here the child is educated for manhood, his principles and prejudices receiving their colouring from his first impressions. None are keener observers than little children ; even the little infant will watch narrowly the mother's face, the lights and shadows of which, like a key-note, strike a corresponding chord in its little heart.

How necessary then, that in the family religion should be exhibited, not only in its purity, but in that attractiveness which true piety implies, Who can calculate the extent of influence upon a little child which a person exerts, who is morose, or peevish, or uncharitable, or murmuring and gloomy, while they profess to be religious, in opposition to one who is cheerful, trustful, unselfish, and kind ? With the former, he associates religion as something hideous, calculated to produce unhappiness and gloom ; while the latter conveys the impression of "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, or of good report." The teachings and precepts of the former are life writings in the sand, washed away by the tide ; while the instruction and admonition of the latter are graven as in the rock.

Children suffer much from the inconsistency of other members of the same family. It is a sad mistake to require more of children than we ourselves perform ; to be exacting of them, and lax with ourselves ; to be rigid in governing, while destitute of self-government. The fountain cannot rise higher than the reservoir from which it flows ; no more can precept go one step beyond practice as a means of good.

However unconsciously it may be, every child is taking lessons each day, on some, if not many, *moral* subjects. Each day he hears or sees that which will tell on his whole future life ; the germ of a principle which will never die, may have originated in a thoughtless remark or a trifling act.

In the family all the moral virtues, or their opposites, are inculcated by living examples. That little boy who was witness to a bargain where the father by false pretences passed off an article, known to be worthless,

as valuable, has learned a lesson in dishonesty which, if followed, may bring him to the penitentiary or to death; or his conscience may be equally hardened if the same dishonest purpose is manifested in depreciating the worth of an article before it is purchased, and praising it afterwards. "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer, but when he goeth away, he boasteth." How many little ones stumble over these faults. Is it not often they hear the remark, "I bought it for half its value?" and with a feeling of self-satisfaction, is not the remark made? The little girl upon whose ear the words have scarcely died away—"O dear, I wish people would stay at home, is astonished and perplexed to hear the *friendly greeting* with which her mistaken, misguided mother, receives the *unwelcome* guest.

Vile insincerity! if thou hast not gained a proselyte, it is because of thy hateful mein. That young person who is taught to lie, by saying, "Not at home," may justly say with Pilate, "What is truth? The petty meanness, the faults, the sins, the secret violations of the Sabbath, so artfully concealed from the eye of man, may justly prompt the child who witnesses them, to say, Can God see?"

Such is the process that is going on in a greater or less degree, in every family. The influence of some "is a savour of life unto life," while that of others is of "death unto death."

To produce the former result, it is necessary to form a right estimate of the true dignity of the family. The untold influence it will have, not only on the present, but on future generations; its *results* which eternity can alone unfold; the value of the souls which compose it; and the happiness or misery, the weal or woe, for which it is responsible—these testify to its importance. In itself a little rill, the influence of a single family may go on deepening and widening, until, like a mighty river, it may bless the world by its spirit of benevolence. To effect great results, it is not necessary that it be powerful in its beginning. It may be the inmates of the humblest cottage that exert the greatest influence.

The family is the theatre where every human being begins to act his part in the grand drama of life. The tiny infant has commenced a life that will know no end; it is a lamp lighted, to burn "while immortality endures." And for that infant, God has a definite purpose, a life-plan drawn from "all eternity." It is astonishing how few have any comprehension of the meaning of life, of its Divine appointments, of the work it is designed to accomplish, even in obscurity. To every work and enterprise there is a proper place assigned; to every mechanical *art*, to

every department of science, to every agricultural, mercantile, or commercial pursuit, propriety and convenience lend their aid. "To everything there is a purpose, and a time for everything," except the right training of immortal minds. In nothing is there such a misapplication of time and talent, such a lavish waste of opportunities, and golden moments for instruction, when the heart is tender and pliant.

Within the human heart, unseen to mortal eyes, are love and hate, benevolence and avarice, hope and fear, ambition and recklessness, courage and timidity, faith and despair. Faith alone is the result of renewing grace, the others are brought out by circumstances.

The child thinks. He thinks upon great subjects; he hears others converse upon them; he picks up an idea, very likely an erroneous one; he asks you to tell him, but you think the subject above his comprehension, or you have not time or interest enough in the subject to attend to him. He retains his erroneous idea until years after he has gained the desired information. Erroneous ideas about God, and death, and heaven, almost any one can remember after he has arrived at mature years. Would you but condescend to converse with your little ones, rather than put them off with the time-worn excuse, "you cannot understand," would not those little ones hang upon your lips, and prefer your society to the unmeaning ribaldry of the street?

Everything about God, and especially the blessed Saviour, should be taught by the fire-side to children. Many Christians have "been all their lifetime subject to bondage, through fear of death," merely from injudicious teaching, or rather avoiding teaching upon the subject by their parents when young.

Many persons have groped through the world in darkness, from the fact of having the dark side of everything held up before them by some gloomy, misanthropic person. Avoid such a dark murky atmosphere in the family where are young and tender minds; a gloomy picture is daguerrotyped upon the mind which will ever be starting into life to annoy its possessor.

Let every dark cloud have its "silver lining." Let an overruling Providence be taught—ever ready to dispense good, giving for every dark day, a light to follow it; for every loss, a gain; for every trial, rest.

Let the Saviour be set forth, as loving little children and delighting to bless them, and then may that love which casteth out fear be in every heart, and every heart given to Him, "in whom all the families of the earth are blessed."

LITTLE LYDIA.

LITTLE LYDIA was the daughter of a German missionary, who had lost his health whilst serving God in India. With his family, he had returned to his native village to recruit, trusting God would soon restore him to strength, and enable him to continue the work he loved so well. This little one, the pet of the family, was but four years old; but, young as she was, her heart was full of love to God. She would sit long upon her mother's knee, listening to the story of the infant Jesus, and the tears would trickle down her cheeks as she heard how he had no warm cradle in which to be lulled to rest, and that the softest pillow his little head first knew was a bundle of straw laid in a manger. Her disposition was very truthful and upright. On being asked, one day, why she held her hands so tightly behind her back whilst walking through a garden belonging to a lady in the village, she replied, "Because I love the flowers so dearly, that my hands feel tempted to pluck them; and then, they are not mine, but Miss M——'s." But God saw fit to take this little one unto himself. One day she was sitting on her mother's knee as usual, when she suddenly started up, and, leaning over her mother's shoulder, exclaimed, "Give it me! that golden crown; give it me!" and, as if she conversed with some being unseen by all but herself, continued, "Oh, no! I cannot leave mamma yet; nor papa; nor my brother, nor my sister, nor my little garden; I must not go with you,—only give me that golden crown." Then sinking back into her wondering mother's lap, she sobbed, "Oh! how my head is aching!" A few days passed, and the fading glory of the setting sun illuminated the little room where that mother sat weeping by her dying child. She lay so still and quiet, one might have thought life had already fled; but, as her parent gazed upon her with nigh breaking heart, she raised her head, and stretching out her hands as if to grasp some unseen object, exclaimed, "I am coming now! the golden crown is mine! wait for me; I am coming!"

The seraph had not long to wait, for ere the clock had struck once more, he was winging his way with the little spirit to heaven, where she might receive the wished-for golden crown from the hands of her loving Saviour.

I saw the body that had held that spirit on the earth, before they lowered it into the little grave. The smile that still lingered on the waxy

lips seemed but the reflection of the rays of glory which the angel's crown had cast upon her.

How peacefully she slept! Her life had been as the early dew, beautiful and pleasant while it lasted; and when its mission was fulfilled, drawn upwards to the skies, whence it came.

They mourned not for her, as they that have no hope; they knew she had been but lent them on earth, that now, when transferred to a happier home, their affections might be drawn more heavenwards,—their longings to be away and at rest, in God's good time, more deep and ardent.

"She is not dead, but liveth," whispered the suffering mother to us, as we gazed on the fair but empty jewel-casket before us.

Yes, Lydia had now begun a life of which cold death knows nothing. Life's partner here, he is unknown in heaven, for there "there shall be no more death!"

"I AM THE DOOR."

JOHN IX. 9.

OUR Saviour compares himself to a great many different things, in order to help us better to understand what he is in himself, and what he is willing to be to all who love him. In this chapter he speaks of himself as the good Shepherd; and in this verse he calls himself the door to the sheepfold, by which all his sheep and lambs must enter in.

Dear children, do any of you wish to be the lambs of Jesus? Do you wish to be among the happy number whom the good Shepherd takes care of, and feeds, and watches over in this world, and takes when they die to the green pastures and living waters of the heavenly country? Then you must come into the sheepfold *by the door*. You must come to Jesus, alone, on your knees, and humbly ask him to pardon all your sins, to give you a new heart, to make you his own loving and obedient children. He is ready and willing to hear this prayer. But there is *no other* door into the fold.

Have you ever seen what is called a turn-stile—a kind of gate which turns round, so as only to let one person in at a time? All who wish may pass through, but each one must go separately. This has often made me think of the way in which sinners are to get into the kingdom

of heaven, or the sheepfold of Christ, by himself the door. He is able and willing to receive all who come; he tells us none shall be cast out (John vi. 37); but every man or child must come by himself. I cannot put you through the door; your parents, your minister, however much they wish and pray for it, cannot change your heart; you must *each one* come alone to Jesus. My little reader, whoever you are, have you thought of this? Have *you* gone to the dear Saviour, and are you one of his happy lambs? If not, will you go *now*?

Oh! how thankful we should be for this comforting saying of the Lord, "I am the door." If a poor lamb were chased over the hills by a hungry wolf, and came to a place where he saw a fold all walled round, with the sheep within quite safe, what a joyful sight that would be! But the lamb's next thought would be, "Where is the door? oh! how am I to get in before the wolf comes up to me?" And when the kind shepherd opened, how eagerly he would run in! So ought we to rejoice, and give thanks to our heavenly Father for the way of escape opened to us from our great enemy, who is always seeking to destroy our souls. Oh! let us all make sure that we have fled to Jesus as the door, and pray every day that he may keep us near himself, and that we may never wander away from him again.

SUDDEN CONVERSION.

BY H. W. BEECHER.

It is a fact somewhat remarkable that most of the conversions narrated in the Bible were rapid, and in some instances instantaneous. Paul, on his way to Damascus, was struck down, in a moment, by the visible presence of God. He saw a great light at mid-day, and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and he was so suddenly and overwhelmingly impressed by this manifestation, that he could do nothing but yield to the power of God; so that from being a persecutor of the church, he was at that moment changed to be its chiefest apostle. Matthew, the publican, sitting at the receipt of custom, was met by Christ, who said to him, "Follow thou me," and it is said that "he arose and followed him."

The conversion of the thief on the cross, during the very last moments of his life, at the eleventh hour of hope, was almost marvellously

sudden, yet not on that account doubtful; for Christ confirmed it by saying, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

And there are similar instances at the present day. Sudden and unexpected conversions are not unknown to any Christian Church. There is nothing whatever absurd in the idea, however some may affect to ridicule it. A conversion which takes no longer time to begin and end, than the sun to rise from day-break to the mountain top, may be just as undoubted as though it had been the work of a month or a year. The impression that a spiritual change, in order to be genuine, must be a long and gradual process, dragging itself through weary weeks and months, during which the mind is to pass through much anguish and tribulation, until finally the light shall arise and shine, is simply foolish. Time adds nothing to the thoroughness of conversion, nor suffering to the evidence of it. In many cases much time is taken, and much suffering felt, but neither of these is to be considered as an absolutely necessary part of it.

Yet there are many persons whose conversion is a long and severe struggle, during which they alternate week after week, and month after month, between hope and fear, who, were it not for perplexing their minds with a wrong notion of what they are to do and to be done with, might go up the mountain almost without going through the valley. Such instances have occurred among the most eminent Christians. It is known that John Bunyan went through awful terrors, as a consequence of a long-continued exercise of mind, before he found religious peace; and his experiences are embalmed in some of the best writings in the English language. But it is our impression that the conversion of Bunyan might just as well have been a work of days as of months. John Wesley also went well-nigh three years before he found what he sought. This was a period of great effort, of continued urging up to duty, of watchfulness and carefulness, involving almost unutterable trouble of mind. He finally went among the Moravians, and there reached those views which finally gave him quiet in Jesus Christ.

There are not only single instances like these, but multitudes of others—of persons who have for years been bound, as it were, by some invisible cord, which has kept them in this bondage. The difficulty in many cases results from an erroneous apprehension of what is to be taken as evidence of conversion. Men make a common mistake between what is a religious life, and certain expected *fruits* of a religious life, and confound the two things.

Now, to be Christian is to obey Christ, no matter how you feel; but many persons think that after this obedience is rendered, there will be plunged into their souls what is called a Christian experience; and that this experience, coming afterwards, is piety. They therefore attempt to conform to the love of Christ, and then wait for a projected or interjected experience, which is supposed to be a religious state. It is no doubt better to have the feeling that follows, than to be without it; but the feeling itself is not to be taken for that of which it is simply the fruit, and if there is no feeling, it is not to be taken as evidence that there is no real religious life.

When a man sits down to a piano, reading his sheet of music before him, and touching the keys that correspond to the notes that he reads, it is certainly better to be able to hear the sounds that follow. But Beethoven—one of the saddest instances in history of human greatness and suffering—becoming deaf in the latter part of his life, used to sit down to the harpsichord, and play tunes of which he heard not a single note. Even though his instrument fell into all manner of jangling discord, by becoming long out of tune, yet he still played upon it all those grand, swelling harmonies which were tumultuous in his soul. Now, if Beethoven had waited till his ear could have become conscious of the playing, he would not have played at all. And it is the same with persons who try to live a religious life. There are two things which they must avoid confounding. They should mark the difference between following Christ, and the sensations which come in consequence of following Him. If a person trying to come into the discipleship of Christ, expects to do so by sitting down and waiting for a certain pre-conceived state of mind to come to him, as he might wait for a pair of wings to sprout out of his shoulders, he must not be surprised if he is disappointed. But many earnest-minded persons—who are near the kingdom of heaven, and desire to enter it—hinder themselves by just such difficulties. They deny to their own minds the evidences of their own conversion, simply because they do not experience the feelings which *other* persons are known to have experienced. They are nearer than they think to their Father's house, yet not believing that they are near, they do not go in. Being so close to the gate that if they were closer they must certainly enter, they yet sit down and tarry without—mourning all the while that they cannot see their Father's face. Such a mistake is one of the saddest that can happen a man's life, and should be guarded against by more careful discrimination and better teaching.

SECRET PRAYER.

THIS is an age of association. Great corporations often supply the lack of individual enterprise and ability. Benevolent societies serve as the almoners of large charities, from which the most valuable element, that of personal sympathy, is eliminated. There is reason to fear that associated prayer is often regarded as an equivalent for secret wrestling in the closet. The frequent morning prayer-meetings, and those at noon-day, if made up of men who come from the closet, where they have been prostrate before the Lord, like Elijah on Horeb, or have wrestled with God, like Jacob at Peniel, carry with them the power which no visible results can measure. But Christians sometimes desert the secret place of prayer, hoping to find a substitute in the social gathering. The former seems cold ; the latter warms and stimulates. The former requires effort to quicken the pulse of devotion, and isolate the soul from the world ; in the latter, the end is secured without a struggle, and the heart is tender and devout. The conscience is easily quieted when piety is an apparent gainer by substituting public for secret worship.

But the gain is only apparent ; the loss is real and fatal. The order of duty cannot be inverted. God invites his people to personal communion with him. When they enter the closet, he bends his ear to hear. His word read in solitude has a life-giving power. The solemnity of being alone with God, from whom nothing can be hidden, strips away all disguises, hushes all self-flatteries, and compels one to deal faithfully with himself. The confession of secret sins, the sorrow for duties neglected, the large and elevating views of the Christian obligation obtained in the closet, are elements of individual piety which social meetings can never supply in equal measure. Ravishing views of God's favour, which is life, and of his loving-kindness, which is better than life ; a secret assurance of oneness with Christ, even as he is one with the Father ; and a confidence that he shall never be left alone in temptation, or in sorrow,—these are the elements of Christian experience which, if enjoyed at all, must be found in the closet.

We fear that devotion in the closet is too much neglected. The hurry and bustle of the age does not foster it. The early hours at which men hasten to their business leave little time for communion with God. The Bible is often unopened in the morning, and if a few moments are snatched for lifting the heart to God, it is with a distraction of mind, and

a want of devout emotion, which rob the service of half its value. The evening hours overtake one as he is weary with the toils of the day, and the form of devotion supplants the reality. Reader, is it not so?

[The following sentences from *Mr. Ryle* are worthy of perusal in this connection:—]

Although “great multitudes came together to hear Jesus, and to be healed by him of their infirmities,” he still made time for secret devotion. Holy and undefiled as he was, he would not allow the demands of public business to prevent regular private intercourse with God. We are told that “he withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed.”

There is an example set before us here, which is much overlooked in these latter days. There are few professing Christians, it may be feared, who strive to imitate Christ in this matter of private devotion. There is abundance of hearing, and reading, and talking, and profession, and visiting, and almsgiving, and subscribing to societies, and teaching at schools; but is there, together with all this, a due proportion of private prayer? Are believing men and women sufficiently careful to be frequently alone with God? These are humbling and heart-searching questions; but we shall find it useful to give them an answer.

Why is it that there is such apparent religious working, and yet so little result in positive conversions to God—so many sermons, and so few souls saved; so much machinery, and so little effect produced; so much running hither and thither, and yet so few brought to Christ? Why is all this? The reply is short and simple: *There is not enough private prayer.* The cause of Christ does not need less working, but it does need among the workers more praying. Let us each examine ourselves, and amend our ways. The most successful workmen in the Lord’s vineyard are those who are like their Master—often and much upon their knees.

JESUS WEPT.

JOHN XI. 35.

THIS is the shortest verse in the whole Bible—only two words, but how very sweet and comforting they are! Let us think a little of what we may learn from them.

1. We learn what kind of heart was that of our dear Lord and Saviour. He was the mighty God, who could do all things, and was soon to show

his almighty power by calling back the soul of Lazarus to his body again. But he was also man. He felt grief and compassion, as you and I do; and when he saw the sad sisters, Martha and Mary, and all their friends weeping round the grave, his tender heart was full of pity—"Jesus wept" too.

2. We may learn that *we* are allowed to mourn when those whom we love are taken from us by death. It cannot be wrong for us to do anything that Jesus did. He wept, and therefore we may weep also; only we must take care, as Paul tells us (1 Thess. iv. 13), not to sorrow as those who have no hope; who do not know and love Jesus; who have not him for their comforter. We must not weep so long or so bitterly as they do; but take comfort, knowing that if our dear friends have "fallen asleep in Christ," they are, "not lost, but gone before" to heaven, and that we ourselves can never be without hope, while we have God for our Father and Jesus for our Friend.

3. We may learn to go to Jesus for help and comfort in all our sorrows. He is called "the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He *knows* what our poor sad hearts feel. He pities us. He will help us. My dear children, though you are very young now, some of you may already remember the time when your dear father or mother, or little brother or sister died; when their souls went to God, and their bodies were laid in the grave. Many were weeping around you on that sad day, and you were weeping too. Perhaps you are still wearing a black dress, and tears still flow when you think that you will see that smile and hear that sweet voice no more. But think of these words, "Jesus wept." Go to him on your knees alone, and tell him all your sorrow. Tell him all you have lost, and ask him to make it up to you, by making you know and feel more of his own love. Ask him to pardon all your sins, to give you a new heart, and to make you feel as David did, and as even a young child may do, that "it is good for you to be afflicted." And then look forward with hope and joy to the time when God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, in the good land where sorrow and sighing shall never come.

"*Jesus wept.*" How many a sorrowful heart has thanked God that the Holy Spirit made these two little words be written down in the Bible! If you are happy now, dear children, be thankful. I do not wish to make you sad; but I wish you to seek Jesus *early*, and know that you have him to go to, as your friend and comforter, when sorrow comes.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

REDEMPTION AND ITS OBLIGATIONS.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 13, 1859,

(First Sunday in Lent)

BY THE REV. J. C. MILLER, M.A.,

(Rector of St. Martin's, Birmingham; and Canon of Worcester.)

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON.

“ Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus ii. 14.

AN eminent expositor has observed that this chapter may well form the creed, the system of ethics, and the text book of every Christian preacher. Here will he find what he is to believe, what he is to practise, and what he is to preach. And in proportion as he copies the example and catches the spirit of St. Paul will he be preserved from those extremes between which in different ages the church has oscillated, a doctrinal preaching which has substituted the orthodox but frigid dogmas of an abstract theology for the setting forth of a living Jesus, and a practical preaching which has been little else than a Christless legalism and an unevangelical morality—galvanising but not vivifying dead souls; a system of morals in which the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost had no place. St. Paul, recognising the faith of God's elect as the bond between himself and Titus, and bidding that youthful minister speak the things which become sound doctrine, declares that sound doctrine consists in teaching the aged women that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, the aged men that they be sober, grave, and temperate; the young women that they be sober, do love their husbands and do love their children; young men that they be sober minded; servants, that they be obedient unto their masters in all things; and subjects that they obey principalities and powers. Such was the practical tendency of the preaching of St. Paul. But these practical injunctions which he would have carried out in the ministry of Titus were based, as you will observe, upon the rich and comprehensive declarations of the text and its context—namely, “The grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men, teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live so-

Mother's Magazine, April, 1859.

berly, and righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Thus then, brethren beloved, you will not fail to perceive that all Christian practice in its minutest detail, and in its most comprehensive and inclusive application, is based by St. Paul upon the truth of our redemption in Christ Jesus; and it is to this redemption that your attention will be called to-night.

You are invited to consider, in the first place, the Redeemer's work; and secondly, the design of his redemption and the consequent obligations of the redeemed.

I. Consider, in the first place, from our text, Christ's work of redemption. And notice particularly, that this is its main and its capital feature—namely, that it is a work of redemption. It is, in other words, the paying of a price in order that we may be delivered from our spiritual captivity, and from the slavery in which we lie by sin. This redemption is presented to us in the word of God in a threefold aspect. In one place—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." In our text—"Christ hath redeemed us from all iniquity"—that is, from the power of indwelling sin. And in other interesting passages, which it will not fall within our scope to consider this evening, the day of Christ's second advent is spoken of as the day of redemption, because it is at its return that the glorification of his redeemed people will be consummated, by that which the Apostle designates in his Epistle to the Romans, as the "redemption of our bodies." The price at which this redemption was effected is declared by St. Peter not to have been a corruptible price, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Thus, then, you will perceive that the basis of Christ's redemption is this—his self-surrender is a sacrifice for the sins of man, his death in its design was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the world. It was not the death of mere heroism or martyrdom; it was distinct in its character from all acts of mere self-sacrifice, as our own church has scripturally and unequivocally declared to her members—"He made there by his one oblation of himself once offered a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." The death upon the cross was the crowning act of that obedience by which in the combination of its active and passive elements, the sinless life obeying, and the expiating death atoning, the Lord Jesus Christ became what he is declared to be in Scripture, the righteousness of God to man. And, brethren, it seems most important to notice, in establishing the Scriptural view of the design of the death of Christ, that continual stress is laid, in various passages of the word of God, not simply upon the fact of the death, but upon the shedding of the blood. At first sight, the distinction may seem one scarcely worth dwelling upon, but consider for a moment how completely this fact, to which I would call your earnest attention, in the days in which our lot is cast—consider, I say, how the fact, that not simply the death, but the blood-shedding of Jesus Christ is dwelt upon in Scripture, establishes the truth for which we contend, that the design of that death was propitiatory. By the act of transgression, man's life had become forfeited to his Maker. The penalty of sin was the losing of life. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "The wages of

sin is death." And the philosophy, if I may so say, of the gospel plan of salvation, in so far as it respects the atonement is this,—that inasmuch as life was the forfeit, inasmuch as death was the penalty, the being who would undertake, and who was accepted of God as the surety, and as the substitute of the transgressor, must yield up his life—or, in other words, must endure death, and as the life is declared by Scripture to be in the blood, his blood must be shed if the transgressor was to be redeemed. And, hence you find, brethren—and it seems a difficulty inseparable to those who deny this bearing of the death of Christ—you will find that in the word of God every blessing connected with our salvation is distinctly connected with the shedding of the blood. It is by the blood of Christ that peace is made, it is by the shedding of his blood that we have redemption, even forgiveness of sins; it is by the precious blood that the persons of believers are consecrated, as of kings and priests, unto God; it is by his blood that we are declared to be justified, and it is by his blood that the robes of the saints in glory are declared to have been washed, and it is of his blood that the saints shall sing for ever the anthems of eternity. But be it ever remembered, that these statements, however important, do not go to the root of the matter. This is not the starting point of gospel mercy. The fountain has its source from the throne of Deity, and the rise of the stream of mercy is lost amid the depth of the eternal counsels. The work of Christ was not the cause but the fruit of the Father's love. It is not that up to the point of Christ's interposition the Father was unwilling and implacable; but Christ himself, the provision of Christ, the surrender of Christ, is the manifestation of the love of God. Oh, be it remembered by every one of you, brethren, that Christ did not die in order that the Father might love us, but that Christ was given because the Father had already loved us, and because he desired—in consistency with his own attributes and perfections, and with the principles of his moral government—he desired to bring in mercy for the fallen, so that he might be "just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." This, then, briefly stated in the outline is Redeemer's work—a work of expiation, to deliver men from the curse of the law, from the power of sin, and from the triumph of death.

II. We pass on to notice our second point—namely, the design of this work in the aspect in which it is here presented, and the consequent obligations of the redeemed.

Now you will observe that in our text, the redemption which is in Christ Jesus is presented mainly, and indeed exclusively in one of its aspects only. "He gave himself for us"—here is the practical bearing of it upon ourselves; here is its bearing upon the work of our sanctification; here is the connection between evangelical doctrine and personal holiness and good works—"He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." As the Apostle expresses it to the Galatians—"He gave himself, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father." And herein, between the design of redemption, as it is stated by the Apostle in the text, and the design of God's redemption of ancient Israel from Egypt, we trace a close analogy, for the language of God to ancient Israel, after he had redeemed them from the brick-kilns by a mighty arm, was this—"Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

The term "peculiar" is not here synonymous with "singular" or "eccentric," but it simply means, that those who were redeemed by Christ were designed to be a special property, a peculiar treasure belonging unto Jesus, as loved with his infinite affection, and as bought with his precious blood. And if we look carefully at the language of the original, we shall find that the Apostle's words most carefully guard us against any Antinomian abuse of the free mercy of the gospel. The word which is translated in our English version "iniquity," literally means "lawlessness;" and by the declaration subsequently made, that Christ designed to "purify unto himself his own peculiar people," we perceive that in a state of lawlessness man is in a state of uncleanness; and that he is only pure and holy before God when he is brought under the law to Christ. For, my beloved brethren, while it is a truth of the most unspeakable preciousness to every poor sinner that we are not to be justified, that is, we are not to obtain eternal life by the law as a covenant of works—we are not to be justified upon a principle, that is, of self-righteousness; we are, as the Apostle expresses it elsewhere, under the law to Christ; and that man abuses gospel mercy to God's dishonour and to his own destruction, who so perverts the free redemption which is in Christ Jesus, as to make it a ground for personal carelessness, and still more for licentiousness and for iniquity. Thus you will observe, that a mighty practical principle is at once introduced into the heart of the man who receives in all its power the truth of his redemption in Christ Jesus. What is it, my beloved brethren, that is at the root of all sin? What is that one giant principle which is to be traced in some or other of its countless developments in every act of sin? That sin is, in one word, selfishness. It is the indulgence of self, in some one or other of its countless forms. And in exact proportion as you introduce into the heart of man a principle which is expulsive of self, or a principle which is powerfully antagonistic of self, in that exact proportion you bring the man under the dominion of God and into the paths of true holiness. Now you will observe, that the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, supplies precisely the moral leverage that we want. The redemption which is in Christ Jesus involves this great and mighty principle—that if I have been bought by the precious blood of Christ I am not my own; that henceforth the love of Christ is to constrain me, that henceforth I am not to live to myself, but to him that died for me and rose again, and that I am to glorify God in my body and in my spirit, which are God's. You remember that remarkable passage, one of the most affecting passages in the whole compass of the Apostle's writings, in which St. Paul introduces us to the inner workings of his own heart. St. Paul at once discloses to us the mighty mainspring which led him to those acts of self-devotion, to that life of endurance, and of energy for his Lord's sake that have made him the greatest of all human models and exemplars; and when Paul bares his heart before us, what is it we behold? It surely must be a mighty principle which impelled a man, and sustained a man through such a life. This is Paul's account—"The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and who gave himself for me." And, my beloved brethren, it is not hearing of Christ in sermons; it is not shedding tears over the pathetic histories of the gospels; it is not sentimentalising about Christ, or about God's mercy in him, that will save us. It is not this which will be the mighty principle of reformation within the human heart, which is needed. No, it must be as it was with Paul, in the

case of every one here present. "He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*." And when this principle is once received into the heart, when the love of Christ is thus brought home to the individual soul, then there is no need to seek for any further principle of obedience, or holiness, or virtue. Here is the powerful motive which will do all that is needed, and which under the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit of God will gradually reduce that soul to conformity to Christ's image, and so to obedience to God's law :

"Talk they of morals! Oh, thou bleeding Lamb,
The grand morality is love of thee."

Thus then, brethren, we are at once in a position to do that which is our main desire and our chief business upon this solemn occasion—namely, to endeavour to bring home to you individually, the obligations devolving upon the redeemed, in consequence of this work of Christ's redemption. Alas, alas ! it is a thought which may well sadden the preacher's heart, and may dash those feelings of joy and thankfulness, with which from this pulpit he beholds so mighty a mass of persons thronging to the house of God to listen to the sounds of the Gospel—to reflect how many a one there is in this congregation who, having been taught all these things in early infancy, who having been marked with the sign of Christian baptism, having been enlisted as Christ's soldier and servant when a child, has from that moment wandered far off from the paths of obedience, has denied the Lord that bought him, and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he should have been sanctified, an unholy thing. My beloved brethren, it may be that I, as the minister of God find many of you to-night captives and slaves to the devil and to sin. It may be that there are many before me who are yet hugging the chains from which Christ died to deliver you. He calls you, let me remind you, to the dignity and the happiness of his service, and he calls you by motives, and by principles of action which, as the context of this passage teaches us, will come home to both sexes, and to every age and every condition of life. Among the thousands who are gathered together here, how great are the differences of social position ; how striking are the varieties of age ; how infinitely various are the features of the moral character ; how widely different are the powers of the intellect ! And yet, my beloved brethren, in the simple gospel which I am seeking to preach to you to-night, in the simple motives which flow from Christ's work of redemption, for you and for me are found principles and rules of action which come home to us all. But you will ask me, how am I to carry these out ? We are thankful to tell you, and to refer to almost every page of the New Testament in proof of the assertion—that the religion to which we would invite you as the religion of Jesus Christ your Redeemer, is a religion which is precisely suited to the working-day world in which we live ; that we are not here, in the name of Jesus to invite you to live the life of ascetics or withdraw into monasteries and convents. While we are here to call you from the world in the sense of not being its votaries, of not being slaves to its passions and not seeking your happiness in its honours and pleasures ; we are here to tell you, that it is in the world, and in those lawful callings in which God has placed you, that you are primarily to endeavour to glorify the Redeemer whom we preach. My beloved brethren, it is a great mistake made by many, to suppose that the religion of Christ calls upon us to draw a sharp line between that which is spiritual and that which is secular ; as if all our religion was, so to speak,

to be huddled up into a few moments of the day, or into certain religious acts and exercises. The more deeply you understand the principles of the gospel, the more experimentally and the more powerfully you embrace and live upon the religion of Jesus Christ, the more you will perceive, and the more you will exhibit to others your perception of the truth, that what the religion of Jesus does is this—it spiritualises that which is secular ; it sends the man of business back to his counting-house, sends the mother back to her nursery and her household ; it sends the servant back to her kitchen, it sends the apprentice back to his master's service, and it sends the working man back to his manufactory or to his task of humble daily toil, with the desire to elevate and consecrate all this by the love of Christ, and by doing his work as in the sight of God, and as under the assistance of God's Holy Spirit.

Now, my beloved brethren, we shall agree that such is the Christianity that we want. The call of the day is for the practical, and for the earnest, and for the active Christianity. But if we are to have this, it must be based, remember, upon apostolic doctrine. It must be based upon no newly-fashioned articles of faith, upon no perversions and accommodations of gospel truth, but upon the truth of our redemption in Christ Jesus. Alas, alas ! how little is Christ loved ; how little is Christ's teaching obeyed, even by those who bear his name in our Island ! How often is the gospel of our Lord and Saviour disgraced in the eyes of the unbelieving and of the world, by those who make a devout profession, but who carry not out the precepts of the Bible ! I do not deny, my dear friends, for one moment, that there is very much to encourage us. I would not set the example of continually complaining of the days in which we live, as if there was not very much in the Christianity of the day which is cheering and which is a cause of thankfulness. Blessed be God, we may point to examples of domestic virtue in the very highest places in the realm ; blessed be God we may point to many a nobleman, a pattern not only to those of his order, but a pattern to all his fellow subjects. We may point to philanthropists abounding among all classes of society ; we may point to works of mercy and works of piety abounding on every side—Ragged Schools for the youthful Arabs of our streets ; missions, whose agents are delving into the very lowest depths of society ; refuges and reformatories for outcasts and criminals of every kind ; we may point with some satisfaction and with some thankfulness to the fact, that when the leading newspaper of this country and of the world puts forth in a few powerful lines the case of outcasts, the munificent response of some £12,000 is made within the course of a few days. We may point to much that is encouraging, in the state of our church. I allude not simply to such services as these—services which are but the culmination, if I may so term it, of what many of us have beheld in other places, up and down the length and breadth of our land ; but we may point especially to the fact, that all orders of the clergy, and especially our bishops, are indeed earnestly addressing themselves to the evangelisation of the people ; that we are beginning to feel the anomaly, of having practical heathenism in the midst of masses who are nominally Christian ; and that in many of our dioceses now, our Bishops are no longer visible at an occasional confirmation or consecration only, but are the fathers and the brothers of their Clergy, that they are to be found in our St. Giles's, and our Bethnal Green's, and in the yards of our Omnibus-men—rather desiring to strain our Church system to the utmost

point of elasticity, than to check the movement for good, in the spirit of martinets or despots.

I say, there is very much to encourage us ; but, my brethren, looking at the standard which is presented to Christians in the text, I cannot avoid saying, that there is also very much which is calculated to humble and to pain us. I will not be guilty of the dishonesty, or the unfaithfulness of charging this sin upon the working classes only. I say to our working friends, who are present in this Cathedral to-night, that we have no intention whatever, by the institution or the perpetuation of such services as these, to charge upon them a monopoly of the vice, and the religious indifference, and of the godlessness which are in our land. No, men and brethren, it is very easy to do this ; it is easy from the pulpit in Belgravia, to find fault with the working classes of Bethnal Green, as it would be easy in Bethnal Green to draw pictures of Belgravian luxury. But from the Christian pulpit at least, a faithful testimony must be heard, and I would speak to those of the higher and of the middling classes who are here to-night. I would speak to you of the middling classes, and would ask whether, while we are complaining of the drunkenness, and of the Sabbath breaking, and of the impurity, and of the religious indifference of the artizans and of the poor, there is not too much reason to complain of the mercantile frauds by which the honour of British merchants has been so sorely impeached, of trade lies, and of the adulteration of goods, and false weights and balances, which are notorious in our population ; of the oppression to which many of our poor dressmakers and milliners are subject, in order that they may gratify the whims and caprices of the butterflies of fashion ? And when we look higher, when we look at the higher classes among us, may we not say that there is a degree of luxury, that there is a costliness in the mode of living and in the mode of attire, that there is an amount of the most superfluous Sabbath breaking which may well silence many of us, if it be allowed to pass unrebuked, when we are finding fault with the classes who are yet lower ? And, my beloved, there is another point on which I would indeed touch with delicacy ; for it is a point which needs to be handled with great delicacy in the pulpit, but it is one on which I feel very deeply ; and if the pulpit is not to speak, I know not whence the faithful protest is to come—I mean the gradual lowering of the tone of this nation in matters connected with purity. If, for example, there is to be the slightest shadow of defence for the theatre as a school of morals, at least, we say, let our stage be purged from the representation of such dramas as are but a very poor exchange, if an exchange at all, for the grosser obscenities of Farquhar or Congreve. Is it not a notorious fact, that while the drama is defended, to a great extent, upon the ground of its being a school of morals, the interest of a great number of modern pieces turns more or less upon intrigues of the most vicious kind, and often directly upon the grossest conjugal infidelity ? Is it not a notorious fact, that the demoralising immodesties of the ballet are grown to such a height, that we may well wonder that every modest female does not blush for her husband or her brother to witness them ? Is it not a humbling fact, that within the last year or two, on no occasions have the doors of our Opera houses been so thronged, as when our young men and young women among the aristocracy, and among the gentry, have been gathered together to witness the representation of that which in plain, honest terms is the life of a harlot ? And, my beloved brethren, is it of any avail to pass by these things in the pulpit

with false delicacy, when we can scarcely walk a street whose shop windows do not teem with evidences, that even the latest inventions of modern science are made readily applicable as panderers to vice ; and respectable shopkeepers now in the chief thoroughfares of this metropolis, and our provincial towns, do not hesitate to garnish their windows with representations which, if they are suffered to continue, will give those who defiled Holywell Street, in former years, reason to complain of injustice ! My beloved brethren, the Christian pulpit must be found faithful in such times as these ; and therefore, looking upon this, without exaggeration, I must say, as a great national occasion—these Sunday evening congregations within our metropolitan Cathedral—I desire, while acknowledging before God the causes of thankfulness and encouragement which exist, to point out much that is inconsistent with our profession and with our character, as a nominal Christian people.

But let me for one moment, before this congregation is broken up—let me remember that I have, as God's ambassador, a work to attempt in dependance upon God's Spirit, upon the conscience and upon the heart of all who hear me. Oh, brethren, apply, I would beseech you now—apply the subject of this evening to yourselves. For every man who occupies this pulpit will assuredly desire that this service should be to you something better than a mere spectacle or a mere sensuous enjoyment. True it is that you have in this imposing scene, much that is the combined result of architecture, and of music, and of the wonderful sympathy of numbers. But as the minister of God, preaching here to dying men, I would beseech you ere I close this Holy Book, not to play with public worship, nor with the house of God, nor with the Gospel of Christ. I would entreat you to ask yourselves as you depart from this Cathedral this evening, whether you have really sent upward to God the worship of the heart, whether you have listened to the tale of Christ's redeeming love, as those to whom the hour is fast coming, when the interest in that redemption will be the one thing needful. Oh, sirs, I solemnly charge you, to carry away this recollection, that unto every one of us, and I want to preach to you, not as a mass, but to every isolated conscience here, and to every individual unit in this congregation—to every one of us the moment is fast coming, when the one grand question upon which eternity will hang (and remember that eternity is heaven or hell,) will be, whether we have denied the Lord that bought us, or whether we have received the message of God's mercy in Christ Jesus. Brethren beloved, Christ will soon be back again ; but he will be here to save and not to seek ; he will be here to judge and not to invite ; to glorify believers and not to call unbelievers to repentance ; and his blood, as it will then be, on the robes of his saints, to whiten them for heaven and for glory, so will it be upon the head of every man who has rejected his gospel, crying louder than all your sins for vengeance ; for though your transgressions of God's law shall be a just ground of God's sentence, yet over and above the claims of a broken law shall be the witness of a neglected Gospel. Oh, brethren, let this question come home to your consciences—"How shall I escape, if I neglect so great salvation !" I beseech you, therefore, as we part this evening, cry to that Saviour whom I have sought to preach to you ; accept his mercy ; bind his Gospel to your soul ; count all things but loss for him ; let this, your season of Lent, be a season of penitence, of self-searching, of contrition, of faith, of prayer, and of amendment. Oh, thou sleeper, if thou art in this congregation, awake ! Delay, I beseech you, no longer ; your hour glass of life is running out apace. My warning to you to-night, as I close this sermon is, Escape for thy life. Ask, seek, knock. Come, oh come to Christ, and live !

Sketches and Essays.

HERA AND HER NEW TESTAMENT.

ABOUT the time of the outbreak of the Indian mutineers, the station of Amritzar, was the scene of a noble avowal of the gospel by a soldier of the 35th Native Infantry and his wife Hera. Both had received their knowledge of Christianity through a New Testament, which many years before had come into the possession of Hera, but had long lain beside her like a treasure hid in a field. When but a child of twelve years, having lost her parents, she was sold for a trifle, by the woman to whose care she had been committed, to a European officer in the Queen's or East India Company's service. While residing with him, she had been taught to read Hindu and Persian. But though her residence extended over a period of twenty-five years, the word of God had never been put into her hand. Before her master left India, and during one of his absences in the hills, Hera, who remained in charge of his house at Agra, saw one day a man enter the compound, and ask a drink of water from one of the female servants. He was invited to come into the house, when he entered into conversation with Hera and the servant. On departing, it was observed he had left *a book* behind him. He was a native Christian colporteur or book distributor. On seeing the book, Hera put it aside, that she might call him on passing by another day, supposing he had dropped it accidentally. An opportunity soon occurred of fulfilling her intention. In presenting him, however, with the book, he refused to take it,—“Never mind,” he said, “let it remain.” Still she expected he would call for it at some future day; but finding he did not, she put it away in her box with her clothes. She as yet knew not the treasure she had received. It was for a time like a box of precious ointment sealed. It diffused no sweet odour either for herself or for others.

When her master returned from the hills, Hera showed him the book, told him that she understood it was a Christian book, and that she would like to read it; but, as every native does, she first wanted her master's permission to do so. He did not forbid her, but told her she was not to

ask him any more about it. He was not an unkind master; quite the contrary, for on leaving India he settled a provision on Hera of twenty rupees a month. But his care did not extend to her soul. Possibly he was one of those who had scruples at interfering with native religion. As she saw he did not wish her to read the book, she returned it to the box where she had first placed it. It seemed as if it had been for a perpetual burial; for there it remained for twelve years without her once opening it. But that book could not always lie hid. The colporteur, who left it behind him, had done his appointed work, and that work was to be accomplished through *the book*. It had come into the possession of Hera to teach of Him who came to seek and to save the lost; and though her master frowned upon the book, and its place in her box was undisturbed for twelve years, its seal must be broken and its testimony delivered. It happened, after that long interval, that going one day in the box, she could not tell for what, the book attracted her attention; she thought she would take it out and prove for herself what kind of book it was. Some grief at the time was troubling her heart; she thought it might divert her from her sorrow. She took it out, read a little, and liked what she read. She continued to read till she had read it entirely through. The book was the New Testament. Her heart was so strongly drawn to it, that after having read it through once, she began it again, reading it the second time with more deliberation and reflection, and only in small portions at a time. During this second reading, some light broke in upon her mind, enough to make her see her own darkness and her need of light from heaven. She then began to pray that God would make her understand what she read. And he who opens when we knock, heard her cry. For three years and a half she went on reading and praying, when, to use her own expressive words, "her faith became strong and firm." But the work of that New Testament was not yet accomplished. It had to gather another heathen to him who is the light of the world. It was shortly after this time that, Hera's master leaving India, she was married to a soldier of the name of Ihumah, of the 35th Native Infantry. This launched her upon a sea of trouble. Her husband and his friends disliked her Christian leanings, (for as yet she had not been baptized,) and annoyed and persecuted her to give up her New Testament reading. But the book had become a tree of life to this Hindu woman, and rather than give it up, or the reading of it, she told her husband she would give up everything in the world. Not satisfied with vindicating her own liberty, she longed to impart to her husband the truth that was shedding

peace through her own heart. Would he but read the New Testament with her! She knew his opposition to it, and feared to read it openly. What could she do to bring its saving truth to his ear? She at length gained courage, and fell upon the device of reading her book in a voice so loud from behind the *punda*—the curtain separating the tent—that she could be heard by those who were on the other side. She was resolved that the box of ointment, the seal of which was now broken, should fill the whole house with its odour. The odour did spread. Her husband, and the Seapoys who came to his tent, heard the word of God read. Struck with some things he had heard, to the joy of Hera, her husband told her he should like to hear more of that book. It was no longer necessary to read behind the curtain. The book was about to perform its appointed work for the husband, and deliver his soul also from death. Evening by evening as they ate their food together, Hera read to her husband out of the word of life, and as opportunity occurred, talked with him of what she had read, ever gently asking and pressing the question whether he did not believe all that was written in the book was true. To her assiduity in reading she added, morning and evening, the prayer that God would bless his word, and turn the heart of her husband to himself. At first he would not say that he believed all to be true, but gradually the truth of the gospel opened upon him. Her prayers were heard in her husband one day assuring her that he now believed, and that his faith was daily growing stronger.

United thus in faith, they resolved they should be openly united to the Church by baptism. With this view Ihumah went to the colonel of the regiment, and told him that he wished to become a Christian. The colonel questioning him as to his motives, asked if he thought to benefit himself in worldly matters by the step. "No," he replied, "I wish it because I have learned that I am a sinner, and my only hope of salvation is in Jesus Christ." The colonel put no more questions, gave him a note, and sent him to the missionary of the station, that he and his wife might have the benefit of regular instruction. Hera, true to her New Testament, took it with her, along with the Old Testament, which had lately come into her possession on the occasion of her first visit to the wife of the missionary. She gloried in her book religion. "These," she said, "were her treasury, her wealth, more and dearer to her than all her worldly goods." But rejoicing in the word, she did not disregard its messengers. After a brief course of instruction at the mission-house, a day was fixed for their baptism. Their instruction would have been pro-

longed, but the storm was gathering that was soon to break over India, and try the faith both of missionaries and their converts. The movements of the regiment to which her husband was attached became in consequence so uncertain, that they both felt anxious that their admission into the church should not be delayed. As in warning of the troubles that were approaching, they were reminded on their baptism, of their persecutions, the ridicule, the sufferings to which they might be exposed as Christians; and the question was put, "Do you think you shall be able to bear these, or will you be afraid of them, and ashamed of being taunted with being a Christian?" Very memorable was the answer that broke from the lips of Hera. Would it were the reply of every baptized one! It was the answer of her New Testament, engraven on her heart by the Spirit of all grace; and as we read it, we scarcely dread the baptism of fire into which her Christian baptism must inevitably introduce her. "Why should I be afraid," she answered, "of them? or why should I be ashamed? Should I be afraid of man, who can only kill the body? No, I would rather fear God, who can not only kill my body, but can afterwards cast my soul into hell! And of what should I be ashamed? Not of Jesus Christ; for is he not my only Saviour from sin and its punishment? No; I will never be ashamed of Christ!" And she was true to her promise; the last notice we have of this child of the word still presenting her to us as strong in the faith, and giving glory to God. The final notice is from the wife of the missionary who had instructed her at Amritsar. Before the time of this last interview, the mutiny had burst in its full fury on the North-western Province. Hera had been a witness of its scenes of violence. She had a message to give to her old instructress respecting it—a message which British rulers might well ponder. "I wish to tell you something," said she to that lady, "that has been on my mind,—that during the insurrection, and while an army was before Delhi, I constantly prayed that God would preserve the dominion of the English in this country; and I then made a vow of an offering to God, should my prayer be heard, which I have not yet been able to fulfil, and I wished to know in what way I should devote my offering to God's service." Hera had read in *the book*, "Vow and pay to the Lord your God," and she delayed not, but hastened to keep the commandment.

If any eyes shall glance over this narrative that have looked with suspicion on the Bible circulation and Bible converts in India, they may learn from the simple story we have here told, that there are worse ene-

mies to British rule in that land than Hera and her New Testament,—they may advance to the higher and affirmative conviction, that it is in the continued increase of the numbers so taught in the word of life that we have the best security for an answer to the prayer of Hera—“*The preservation of the dominion of the English in India.*”

REST IN JESUS.

“No man cometh unto the Father but by him.” The way, else untrodden and impassable, between earth and heaven, between the region of selfishness and sin and the pure region of eternal calm and rest, Jesus hath consecrated by the shedding of his precious blood, so that all who will may have boldness to enter in. It is no mere local distance, no outward or material obstacle, that separates the sinful soul from its true home and rest in God. If it were, if the “rest that remaineth for the people of God” were only some far-off scene of outward bliss and beauty, Jesus would not be the Saviour we need. A mere mechanical exercise of power, a mere material omnipotence, might translate us from life’s toil and sorrow to such a rest. But not such is the transition we need. No local change could bring us nearer to him in whom every spirit lives and moves, and has its being. The heaven which God’s presence brings is already in local contiguity to saint and sinner alike. What keeps the sinner out of it is not material but moral barriers: break down these, and heaven’s sweet rest would stream into the spirit. Guilt and sin separate the soul from God as the widest wastes of untravelled space could never separate. Remove these, and the distance is at once annihilated. A purified soul flies instantly, as by an inevitable and resistless affinity, to its rest in the bosom of God. And guilt and sin Jesus alone can remove. From that sense of demerit, that painful consciousness of evil, which makes it terrible for a human soul to face the Infinite Purity, there is no escape but in him whose blood cleanses from all sin. From that dread selfishness that kills in man’s heart all nobler, diviner affections and aspirations, and makes the sinful soul shrink from God as the diseased eye from light, there is no deliverance but in that mighty Restorer, himself incarnate love, who revives within the heart its lost susceptibilities of goodness. Clothing it with an innocence that is but the reflection of

his own, kindling in it a love that is pure as the heaven from whence its fire is caught, Jesus brings the finite soul again into the holiest, sweetest union with the Infinite, opens to it heaven's door, and bids it go in and find in God its true joy and rest. Who would not yield the soul into this Divine Saviour's hands? Who would not listen and respond to the invitation, while still, as of old—infinite pathos in his pleading voice—he offers pardon to the guilty, purity to the defiled, peace, joy, hope, heaven, to the wretched, or that which includes them all—that strange, unearthly blessing—*rest* to the weary and heavy-laden soul?—*Rev. John Caird.*

DIRECTIONS FOR READING THE SCRIPTURES.

As the getting the meaning of them into the mind, and the mind to be familiar with it, lies at the foundation of all other benefits to be derived from them, *attention therefore must be given to what we read*; and questions asked, as to its import, which must be deliberated upon in the mind. The ears of corn do not part with all their grains till the flail has been thrice applied; neither does the Scripture open itself to the inert mind. What is obtained by the mind's own meditation, will abide in it more than by any other way: the act of meditating will lead to the discovery of other truths besides the one in question; and, if not to that at the time, will prepare the way for it afterwards, by laying it up in the mind as the subject of anxiety to receive light upon; by which any occurring elucidation of it will be embraced.

Lean not on Commentaries. Prefer to most of them parallel passages of Scripture. As the diamond is polished only by its own stone, so one Scripture best elicits the meaning and beauty of another. Bagster's Bible is invaluable, for the parallel passages it gives, as well as for many other particulars. Still, those parallel places which we find out ourselves, being guided by the similarity of the sense rather than of the words, are preferable to those obtained by any other course.

Every one should have a Bible of his own, used by him constantly. If possible, a broad margin, and in that margin he should insert against the text, the book and page belonging to his own library, where he has met with an elucidation of it; also emendations heard in discourse, or from the pulpit. Where the remark is too long, or the book containing it is borrowed, some spare leaves at the end should receive it, and the texts

be numbered similarly with the remarks, 1, 2, 3, &c., as they accumulate. These things referred to, on coming to the texts again, perhaps at the distance of years, are most delightful; and thousands of discoveries of Scriptures are thus retained that would otherwise have passed away.

Use a Concordance as seldom as possible; and make a point, whatever it costs, of turning in your own Bible to chapters and verses referred to in reading or discourse; not taking for granted that it is so, or that you know it well; which prevents familiarity with Scripture, and readiness in finding out the places that are wanted, and also leads to great inaccuracy of quotation.

Break from the custom of reading the Bible by fragments or chapters. What other book do we content ourselves with reading by a leaf at a time, or a mere section of a page? Read as much of an epistle, or a history, or a prophecy, at once, as you can. Go over it at first cursorily, to get an outside of it, with the bearings of each part; then renew it, to fill up and mark its particular beauties and imbibe its spirit. To suppose that this will require any great length of time, or effort of attention, is a delusion, that would be dissipated on trial; and the first attempt will insure repetition.

Commit one passage of Scripture to memory every day. It is best to do this in the evening, that it may be with us in our last thoughts at night, occur in wakefulness, or rise with us in the morning, to be ruminated upon while dressing, and to give a right turn or spiritual bias to the mind before it is directed to matters of a different nature. It may be well to attempt no more than one verse, lest, difficulty occurring, the practice should be intermitted and given up. Let no fatigue break in upon the practice for a single evening; and if there be a family, it would be a good method for each to commit a passage and repeat it when assembled in the morning. Matthew Henry was made a commentator partly by this method, and by treasuring up his father's observations in family reading, and transferring to his Bible observations from discourses and books.

Apply Scripture to yourself. Lay up those parts especially which are suited to you: your sins, your calling, your state of mind. Many injure themselves by not distinguishing the parts that apply to them, and taking their portion. If the right application be not known, or a particular attention to it be not paid, the benefit will most assuredly be missed: "What is my character or state of mind, and the class of Scripture that accords therewith?" Never rest if you find yourself at a loss here. Some

parts of Scripture belong to us particularly at one stage, that do not at another. To attempt to comply with exhortation to Christian duty while unregenerate, will be a vain task, and put us upon a wrong foundation: the directions to repent and believe, and the encouragements so to do, are our portion then. So, promises to believers taken by those who should apply to themselves the threatenings to unbelievers, or the contrary, defeat the design of God's Word, and pervert it to injury.—*Rev. J. Liefchild, D.D.*

TRUST THE PILOT.

SEVERAL years since, being at a small seaport, one of those easterly storms came on, which so often prove fatal to vessels and their crews on that coast. The wind had blown strongly from the north-east for a day or two, and as it increased to a gale, fears were entertained for the safety of a fine ship which had been from the commencement of the north-easter lying off and on in the bay, apparently without any decision on the part of her officers which way to direct her course, and who had once or twice refused the offer of a pilot.

On the morning of the Sabbath, many an old weather-beaten tar was seen standing on the highest point of land in the place, looking anxiously at her through his glass, and the mothers listened with trembling to his remarks on the apparently doomed vessel. She was completely landlocked, as the sailors say, (that is, surrounded by land, except in the direction from which the wind blows,) as between her and the shore extensive sand-banks intervened; her destruction was inevitable, unless she could make the harbour. At length a number of resolute men, perfectly acquainted with the intricate navigation of the bay and harbour, put off in a small schooner, determined if possible to bring her into port. A tremendous sea was rolling in the bay, and as the little vessel made her way out of the harbour, the scene became one of deep and exciting interest. Now lifted up on the top of a dark wave, she seemed trembling on the verge of destruction; then plunging into the trough of the sea, was lost from view, not even the tops of the masts being visible, though probably twenty feet high; a landsman would exclaim, "She has gone to the bottom." Thus alternately rising and sinking, she at length reached the

ship, hailed and tendered a pilot, which was again refused. Irritated by the refusal, the skipper put his little vessel about, and stood in for the harbour, when a gun was discharged from the labouring vessel, and the signal for a pilot run up to the mast-head.

The schooner was laid to the wind, and as the ship came up, he was directed to follow in their wake until within range of the light-house, where another sea would allow them to run alongside and put a pilot on board. In a few minutes the vessels came side by side, and the pilot springing into the ship's chains, was soon on her deck.

The mysterious movements of the vessel were explained. She had taken a pilot some days before who was ignorant, but who persisted in his efforts to take the ship in. When first hailed from the schooner the captain was below; but hearing the false pilot return the hail, went on deck and at once reversed his answer by firing the signal gun.

The new pilot having made the necessary inquiries about working the ship, requested the captain and his trustiest man to take the wheel; gave orders for the stations of the men; and charged the captain, on the peril of his ship, not to change her course a hand-breadth but by his orders. His port and bearing were those of a man confident in his knowledge and ability to save the vessel; and as the sailors looked at each other, they said, "That is none of your landsharks," it was evident that confidence and hope was reviving in them.

All the canvas she could bear was now spread to the gale, and while the silence of death reigned on board, she took her way on the larboard tack directly toward the foaming breakers. On, on she flew, until it seemed from her nearness to the breakers that destruction was inevitable. "Shall I put her about?" shouted the captain, in tones indicative of intense excitement. "*Steady*," was the calm reply of the pilot, when the sea was boiling like a cauldron under her bows. In another moment the same calm, bold voice pronounced, "About ship," and she turned her head from the breakers, and stood boldly off on the other tack. "He knows what he is about," said the captain to the man at his side. "He is an old salt, a sailor every yarn of him," was the language of the seamen one to another, and the trembling passengers began to hope. The ship now neared two sunken rocks, the places of which were marked by the angry breaking and boiling of the sea, and seemed to be driving directly on them; "*full and steady*" was pronounced in tones of calm authority by the pilot, who stood with his folded arms on the ship's bows, the water drenching him completely, as it broke over her bulwarks.

She passed safely between them, the order was given for turning on the other tack, and again she stood toward the fearful breakers. Nearer and nearer she came, and still no order from the pilot, who stood like a statue, calm and unmoved amidst the raging elements. The vessel laboured hard, as the broken waves roared around her, and seemed just on the verge of striking, when "*about ship*," in a voice like thunder rose above the fury of the tempest. Again she stood upon the starboard tack, and soon entered the harbour and cast anchor in safety. One hour later and she could not have been rescued, for by the time she reached her anchorage no vessel could have carried a rag of sail in the open bay. Ship, crew, and passengers, more than a hundred in all, must have perished. When the order was given to "*back the foretopsail and let go the anchor*," a scene ensued which baffles the description of painter or poet. The captain sprung from the wheel and caught the pilot in his arms; the sailors and passengers crowded around. Some hung upon his neck, others embraced his knees, and tears streamed down the faces of the seamen, who had weathered many a storm and braved untold dangers. All were pressing forward, if only to grasp the hand of their deliverer in token of gratitude.

And now for the application :—*The ship's crew had faith in their pilot.* He came out of the very harbour into which they sought entrance. Of course he *knew* the way.

Their faith was simple and practical. They gave up the ship to his discretion. Reader! Take Jesus for your pilot, and put your soul into his hand.

THE MORNING COMETH.

WHAT Christian heart does not beat high at the thought of that mild but piercing radiance of divine light now glimmering visibly along all the borders of heathenism? The thick clouds are edged with white, and seem, after the long night, to be stirring on the mountain-side, as if to collect themselves for rolling up, and opening the valleys to the day. It has been said that "beside every group of wild men in the Ethnological Department of the Crystal Palace, the missionary could place a contrasting group of their Christianized countrymen." Again, "The Old Book, the Book of our Redeemer's gift and our fathers' faith, . . . has been

gradually ascending; taking to itself new tongues, spreading open its page in every land,—printed in Chinese camps, pondered in the Red Man's wigwam, sought after in Benares, a school-book in Feejee, eagerly bought in Constantinople, loved in the kloofs of Kafir-land; while the voices of the dead from Assyria to Egypt have been lifted up to bear it witness." Among the millions of India there is a listening and a surmise; amid the strange fascinating roar of civilization, advancing from West, is heard the deep still music of the gospel; a quivering here and there, a faint ruddy flush, as of life, seem to announce that the swoon of superstition, unbroken for a thousand years, may ere long pass away. The all-important preliminary victory that had to be won over anti-Christian prejudice on the part of the new lords of India is no longer doubtful. The change which has taken place in the way in which Indian statesmen regard, on the one side, the Christian missionary, and, on the other, the old superstitions, cannot be better indicated than by citing the words in which it has been expressed by one who is in every way qualified to speak, being himself an Indian statesman; I mean Baron Macaulay. In his speech upon the Gates of Somnauth, Baron Macaulay spoke as follows:—"Some Englishmen who have held high office in India seem to have thought that the only religion which was not entitled to toleration and respect was Christianity. They regarded every Christian missionary with extreme jealousy and disdain; and they suffered the most atrocious crimes, if enjoined by the Hindoo superstition, to be perpetrated in open day. It is lamentable to think how long after our power was firmly established in Bengal, we, grossly neglecting the first and plainest duties of the civil magistrate, suffered the practices of infanticide and suttee to continue unchecked. We decorated the temples of the false gods. We provided the dancing girls. We gilded and painted the images to which our ignorant subjects bowed down. We repaired and embellished the car under the wheels of which crazy devotees flung themselves at every festival, to be crushed to death. We sent guards of honour to escort pilgrims to the places of worship. We actually made oblations at the shrines of idols. All this was considered, and is still considered by some prejudiced Anglo-Indians of the old school, as profound policy. I believe that there never was so shallow, so senseless a policy. We gained nothing by it. We lowered ourselves in the eyes of those whom we meant to flatter. We led them to believe that we attached no importance to the difference between Christianity and heathenism. Yet how vast that difference is! I altogether abstain

from alluding to topics which belong to divines. I speak merely as a politician anxious for the morality and for the temporal well-being of society. And, so speaking, I say that to countenance the Brahminical idolatry, and to discountenance that religion which has done so much to promote justice, and mercy, and freedom, and arts, and sciences, and good government, and domestic happiness,—which has struck off the chains of the slave, which has mitigated the horrors of war, which has raised women from servants and playthings into companions and friends,—is to commit high treason against humanity and civilization.” Still farther East than India, China has heard tidings of a *true* Celestial Empire, from the lips of apostolic men, who have cast behind them all the refinement and social pleasure of Europe, as Paul cast behind him the philosophy of Greece and the lordliness of Rome. Beautiful is this return of the Christian morning from the West to the East. Christianity does not now go forth against heathenism, as in the old Crusading-days, clad in visible armour, and bearing an earthly sword. It steps gently like the dawn, its weapons the shafts of light, wearing the breast-plate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. Clothed thus in the armour of God, if faith does not waver, and love continues to burn, it *will* conquer.

THE SOUL'S EXCUSE.

BY REV. P. B. POWER.

“I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?”—Cant. v. 3.

Love is not apt to hesitate at trifles; when put thoroughly to the test, how much can it undergo, how much can it do!

Is there any blast so cold, that it will not face it; any steel so sharp, that it will not dare it? Is there any night so long, that it will not watch through it; is there any hardship so severe, that it will not endure it?

Such love was here; true, deep, abiding love; and yet, marvellous in the extreme, we hear it saying most unloving words; “I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?”

The subject upon which we are now to enter is “The Soul's Excuse;”

one which the world that is in the habit of openly denying Christ, without even the semblance of an excuse, cannot appreciate, but one which the child of God can understand, and which he will be pleased to hear opened out, because he has, alas! suffered severely from it, and continually fears lest he may be brought into suffering from it again.

Excuses are for the most part radically bad; they generally border closely upon positive untruth, and will very seldom bear sifting examination. We know this from the experience of every-day life, from the excuses which we have all made ourselves, and which others have made to us. Though ours served the present turn, yet, as a real statement of the case, we knew that they were unsound; and though we allowed the excuses of others to pass off as though they were believed, still we insensibly put our own value upon them, and they themselves, in all probability did the same. Hollow excuses must needs be found in a hollow world!

It is painful to live in the midst of so much practical untruth; but how much more painful to find it intruding into our spiritual existence, the most important life of all! A practical lie in our business life may ruin all our prospects of success and wealth; one in our mental life may baffle and perplex us in every investigation we undertake; but in our spiritual life who can tell where this will end? Let us beware of excuses in all our dealings, in all our communings with Christ; if we can render him a reason, well! if we find ourselves driven to an excuse, then let us be silent, in all probability it is a lie.

Here we find a soul, whose standing is undeniably one of grace, guilty of an excuse which brought exceeding sorrow in its train. When we come to consider how this beloved one, occupying such a position as she did towards her Lord, could be guilty of such self-deceit, and unkindness toward the one she loved, as we find here, we should have felt utterly at a loss, if it were not that we know, that even the most advanced of the Lord's people have to deal with deceitful hearts, and that the remnants of corruption are still strong in even the most sanctified souls. This is the cause of the evil—a cause which will not be removed, until we pass hence to an atmosphere of perfect truth, to the place where we shall realise the presence of One who is "The Way, the Truth, and the Life." But it will not do to content ourselves with this general cause; we must not only know something of principles, but of how principles act. The physician does not content himself with knowing that a certain organ of the body is affected, nor with ascertaining that a certain virus has mingled with the blood; he must know how that acts and

reacts, and, so far as opportunity affords, he searches the matter out. It will be well for us in these soul excuses to do the same; we shall often find them shrouded in depths, whence, unknown to us, they might have carried on their mysterious work,—in depths from which they would have acted, but never *come forth*, had we not patiently treaded the labyrinth of our spiritual being, to drag them to the light.

MIRTHFULNESS.

ONCE when travelling in a stage-coach, I met a young lady who seemed to be upon the constant look-out for something laughable; and not content with laughing herself, she took great pains to make others do the same.

Now, travelling in a stage-coach is rather prosy business. People in this situation are very apt to show themselves pceevish and selfish; so the young lady's good humour was, for a time, very agreeable. Every old barn was made the subject of a passing joke, while the cows and hens looked demurely on, little dreaming that folks could be merry at their expense. All this was perhaps harmless enough. Animals are not sensitive in that respect. They are not likely to have their feelings injured because people make fun of them; but when we come to human beings, that is quite-another thing. So it seemed to me, for after a while an old lady came running across the fields, swinging her bag at the coachman, and in a shrill voice begging him to stop. The good-natured coachman drew up his horses, and the old lady, coming to the fence by the road-side, squeezed herself through two bars which were not only in a horizontal position, but very near together. The young lady in the stage-coach made some ludicrous remark, and the passengers laughed. It seemed very excusable; for in getting through the fence the poor woman had made sad work with her old black bonnet, and now, taking her seat beside a well-dressed lady, really looked as if she had been blown there by a whirlwind. This was a new piece of fun, and the girl made the most of it. She caricatured the old lady upon a card; pretended, when she was not looking, to take patterns of her bonnet; and in various other ways sought to raise a laugh. At length the poor woman turned a pale face towards her.

"My dear," said she, "you are young, healthy, and happy. I have been so too, but that time is past. I am now old, decrepit, and forlorn. This coach is taking me to the death-bed of my only child. And then,

my dear, I shall be a poor old woman, all alone in the world where merry girls will think me a very amusing object. They will laugh at my old-fashioned clothes, and odd appearance, forgetting that the old woman has a spirit that has loved, and suffered, and will live for ever."

The coach now stopped before a poor-looking house, and the old lady feebly descended the steps.

"How is she?" was the first trembling inquiry of the poor mother.

"Just alive," said the man who was leading her into the house.

Putting up the steps, the driver mounted his box, and we were upon the road again. Our merry young friend had placed the card in her pocket. She was leaning her head upon her hand, and you may be assured that I was not sorry to see a tear upon her fair young cheek. It was a good lesson, and one which we greatly hoped would do her good.

It is pleasant to see a smiling face. We should encourage our hearts to look upon the sunny side of things, and there is no harm in being merry where no one is injured by it; but in this, as in every other thing, let us be conscientious. The wise man has said, "There is a time to laugh;" but remember, dear children, if we would not displease our heavenly Father, we must take care and not be merry when conscience tells us it is wrong. I have heard children excuse themselves for laughing in the house of God, by saying that they couldn't help it. Now, what is to be done when children can't help doing wrong? When they kneel before God in prayer, do they say, "I have done wrong, but I couldn't help it?" No, they would not dare say that. Let us, then, teach our hearts to be very honest for unto Him who *searcheth* the heart we must tell the whole truth.

DAYBREAK.

A wind came up out of the sea,
And said, "O mists, make room for me!"
It hail'd the ships, and cried, "Sail on,
Ye mariners; the night is gone!"
And hurried landward far away,
Crying, "Awake! it is the day!"
It said unto the forest, "Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!"
It touch'd the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said, "O bird, awake and sing!"
And o'er the farms, "O chanticleer,
Your clarion blow; the day is near!"
It whisper'd to the fields of corn,
"Bow down, and hail the coming morn!"
It shouted through the belfry-tower,
"Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour!"
It cross'd the church-yard with a sigh,
And said, "Not yet! in quiet lie!"—*Longfellow.*

HE IS A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH WHO IS A MEMBER OF CHRIST.

I HAVE seldom heard this catholic and happy doctrine more pointedly expressed than by a poor woman who dwelt in one of the darkest and most wretched quarters of our city. Away from her native home, and without one earthly friend, she had floated here, a stranger in a strange land, to sink into the most abject poverty,—her condition but one degree better than our Saviour's. In common with the fox, she had a hole to lay her head in. Yet, although poor and outwardly wretched, she was a child of God, one of the jewels which, if sought for, we should sometimes find in dust-heaps. With a bashfulness not unnatural, she had shrunk from exposing her poverty to the stare of well-robed congregations, resorting on Sabbath-days to the well—appropriate place!—where a pious man was wont to preach to ragged outcasts, crying in the name of Jesus, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” Supposing, in my ignorance of this, that she was living, like the mass around her, in careless neglect of her soul, I began to warn her. Nor shall I soon forget how she interrupted me, and, drawing herself up with an air of humble dignity, and half offended, said, “Sir, I worship at the well; and am sure that if we are true believers in Jesus, and love him, and try to follow him, we shall never be asked at the judgment day, Where did you worship? Well said, and well shot, thou poor one; that arrow hits the mark! And as I hold no other creed, nor admit anything to be of vital importance but genuine heaven-born faith, let me ask, Are you true believers? Blessed are you! Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! Are you unbelievers, impenitent, ungodly? You may, by profession, belong to a church which holds the head. There is no safety in that. On the contrary, you appear only the more offensive to a holy God. A spot looks worst on the face of beauty; Satan looked most hateful when he stood among the sons of God; and, as I have observed at funerals in the winter-time, skulls never look so grim, nor the churchyard mould so black, as when they have been flung on a bank of snow. Trust not in your church, nor say, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we.” Judgment shall begin at the house of God.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

FAITH THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL PROFIT.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, APRIL 10, 1859,

(Fifth Sunday in Lent,)

BY THE REV. ARCHIBALD BOYD,

(Incumbent of Christ Church, Cheltenham, and Canon of Gloucester.)

AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON.

"Unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."—Hebrews iv. 2.

THERE are few things more perplexing than the positive contrast between the vastness of the means employed for the creation of religious impression, upon the one side, and the scantiness of the best results arising from their employment, upon the other. Upon the one side we see the word of God read, we see the word of God preached, we see the word of God enforced, we see the word of God urged upon the acceptance of man; and that, not only with all the weight that pulpit power can command, but in addition to all that, with all the accessories of learning, of illustration, of explanation, and of commentary. Upon the other hand, we see multitudes of individuals passing years—nay, my brethren, not simply years, but going down into eternity, apparently altogether untouched, unmoved, unmelted, unreformed by the putting forth of all this energy and truth. Now, for all this there must be some cause. Does the fault lie with the instrument itself? is it, or can it be the fact that the word of God itself is defective? that the word of God itself is untrue? that it is unsuitable either from profit, or from style, or from tone to soften and subdue the indifference of man's nature? Or, is it, on the other hand, not so much to be traced to the instrument itself as to the manner in which that instrument should be presented to us. Now, there is but one answer to all this; that the word of God is God's own appointed instrument for breaking down the rebellion of man's nature, winning the man from that rebellion, and bringing him into a blessed state of conformity with God's commandments, of a blessed submission to his Master. Nay, more than this: we can turn to the abstract of it, and we can turn to experience. Is it not the fact that multitudes can tell us that they have found the word of God itself to be the power

Mother's Magazine, May, 1859.

of God unto salvation to them? Can we not lay our hands upon many passages into God's Scriptures in which we find the preaching of the word has melted down the hardness of man's nature, and brought sinners into submission unto Jesus Christ? Nay, have we not among the experience of our own friends, many who can attest that that word has been to them the regenerating power that has made them Christians? the word that has converted them in affliction, the word that has built them up in weakness, the word which has consoled them in the time of affliction, and the same word on which they are prepared to lean, when they are called upon in the providence of the Father to go down into the dark valley of the shadow of death?

If all this be so, beyond all question the fault cannot be traced to the instrument, but the fault must be traced to the subject. It is not that the power impelling is too feeble, but that the power resisting is too strong. Something there is in man's nature that resists God's best appliances; something there is in man's nature that neutralises God's intended impressions; something there is in man's nature that counteracts that blessed medicine by which the Lord would heal his spirit; and our business, this evening, if possible, is to find out why it is that we ourselves are perpetually living in the midst of all the appliances, and all the blessings of religion, and yet it may be that multitudes at this moment are living without God and without Christ, and consequently without hope in the world. You will observe that all this it is the Apostle here affirms respecting his own countrymen. He affirms in one passage the power of God's word for conversion, and he affirms in another passage that the word as far as Israel is concerned missed its intention. The Apostle will tell you in one passage, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." The Apostle will tell you in the passage before us this evening, "Unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them;" nevertheless, that word "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

Now, you will observe that this forms the subject matter for our consideration this evening. We have two principal points to endeavour to throw before you. We shall first endeavour to establish the Apostle's proposition, that the thing which he called the gospel, was preached to Israel just as much as it is preached to us; and, then, at the second point to determine what can be the cause why this thing, God's appointed instrument for conversion, as in the case of Israel, failed to accomplish its purpose, so that that word was preached to them, and yet "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those that heard it?"

I. Now, let us bend our attention in the first place to the first of these propositions. We are to endeavour to make it obvious that God did preach the gospel to Israel just as God has preached the gospel to us. In popular thought and in popular language, it is oftentimes supposed that the gospel belongs rather to the Christian than to the Jewish dispensation. We are apt to connect the coming of Jesus Christ into this world with the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We recollect that our Master himself said, "that the poor have the gospel preached to them." We recollect that at the appearance of our Master an angel chanted hymns from heaven, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." But in all probability expressions such as these relate far more to the fulness of that revelation connected with the days of Jesus Christ, than

to the origin of the gospel. My brethren, the truth is this, that there never was a moment in this world's history, since the fall of man in which the gospel of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed. We grant you this, that it may have been announced sometimes with more of power, and more of expansion, and more of fulness than at other times. But no sooner did the necessity commence than the blessed remedy was proposed by God. When God looked down on the creature he had made, and saw that creature in a state of rebellion, perishing from a lack of knowledge—when he looked down and saw our first parents rebelling against his authority, then it was that God in his mercy was pleased to ordain that this blessed system should be provided, and albeit, as we have said before, though the gospel was not preached, with anything of the same fulness that it is to us, to our first parents in paradise, notwithstanding, when we come to consider our subject more closely, this we shall find to be absolute fact, that even in the far-off days of man's original transgression, the gospel was preached to them even as the gospel is preached to us.

Nay, more than this, so anxious—if we may use an expression such as that when applied to Deity—so anxious does it appear that God was to make that instrument an effective instrument in bringing back wayward sinners to himself, that we find God has so planned his gospel as to make it speak to the three great departments of man's nature. He has made that gospel speak, in the first place, to man's hopes; he has made that gospel to speak, in the second place, to man's senses; and, lastly, it has pleased God to make that gospel speak to man's understanding. So, you see, that by enlisting all these faculties of man in his service, by telling man to look hopefully, by telling man to look intelligently, by telling man to look with understanding upon this system, the Lord, so to speak, has grappled with the obduracy of man's nature, as it were fulfilling in all this his own declaration, "I will not let thee go until I bless thee."

Now, take, for example, the very first days that we have of the gospel being preached in this world. It is marked by characteristic simplicity, because it is simply marked by the expression of a promise. And the word has been sounded to the world, that word of promise that formed the very germ or nucleus of all gospel revelations—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." You will observe that in all this there was no appeal simply to man's understanding, there was no appeal simply to man's senses. It was the simple promise that was held out to man. And upon that promise was man to fasten his expectations, as a mariner would fasten his eye upon the distant light, the harbinger to him of safety. What was said of prophecy in times past might be said of the original promise—"a light shining in a dark place," to which we do well to look. Not more clearly guiding to Christ was that promise than the meteor star to the wise men of the east conducting to our Saviour's humble abode in Bethlehem. It twinkled afar off, and called their attention to it by its strange unearthly brightness: it invited them, so to speak, by its mute eloquence to follow it, and it asked those men to leave home and kindred, and go in the direction of the Redeemer. There was nothing, except one solitary verse beyond this, to guide them but that polar star leading them onward; but there was something in that appearance that told them that they were in their right way to Christ; and the men pursued their weary pilgrimage, expecting by and

by to come to him who was in their minds the Redeemer of Israel. And, doubtless, those who have read that first promise that we have quoted, looked upon it in something the same manner as the wise men of the east looked on the guiding star conducting them to the Redeemer. It was all the world had then. It spoke to them of some event, of some circumstance, of some person who would put to rights the waste and confusion that sin had brought into this world. And so through the instrumentality of that promise was the gospel preached in the very earliest times of the world's history.

You may tell me, that after this the gospel was more fully preached when the prophets uttered those magnificent prophecies, that like so many brilliant descriptions all pourtray the coming Saviour. But, after all, all these bright things that Isaiah said, all those magnificent pictures that Zechariah drew, and all those chronicles of prophecy that dropped from the pen of Daniel, what were they all but expansions of this original promise? They were things rather circumstantial to the gospel than the gospel itself, so that by and by, as that gospel developed itself into prophecy, men simply had a larger preaching of the gospel. But the gospel was preached before that, notwithstanding. So to speak, it was a flower planted in Paradise, the seeds of which were brought from heaven itself, and it grew up a strange plant in this unkindly world; but it spread forth its branches, and bore its blossoms, and threw its fragrance to distant lands. It was like a pebble dropped into the ocean; you shall see the curling line created by its fall, and, by and by, as you watch it, you shall see it spread out this circle further and further, until it becomes almost impossible to tell upon what distant shore that circle formed by that pebble will fall. It is like the cloud we read of in the Old Testament where the prophet looked up and saw something, "a cloud no bigger than a man's hand;" but as he continued gazing upon it, the whole heaven became black with clouds, the harbinger that betokened that God was about to send a growing rain upon his inheritance. It was so with the blessed promise when ripened up into prophecy; it was the same thing in nucleus, it was the same thing in germ too, as it was in development. But after all, it was in this way—promise leading on to prophecy, promise budding up into prophecy—that in those early times the gospel was preached to man.

Now, turn to another epoch of man's nature. We have said, so anxious is God to make his gospel understood by his creatures, that not only did God speak to man's hopes, but God spoke to man's senses. You will recollect at once what an immense apparatus—a glorious, a magnificent, a potent apparatus was provided under the Levitical dispensation. Instead of the nakedness of that promise, there came all those substantial forms that we popularly term the institutes or the types of the Mosaic dispensation. In place of man looking upon an abstract thing, a mere idea, they were looking upon a solid substance. They looked upon that lamb that was slain to bear their transgressions; they looked upon that high priest whose business it was to negotiate between them and offended Deity; they looked to the ceremonies connected with the leper's cleansing; and all those who had faith to read these things aright were only reading the gospel from them. For tell me this, were not all these institutions of the Mosaic law expressive of—aye, redolent of the Lord's gospel? That victim, that blood for the sins of the people, what was this but the great atonement offered by our Master on Calvary? The laying of the high priest's hands upon the head of this victim, what was this but the great

doctrine of substitution? The leper cleansed by his cumbrous ceremonies, what, again, was all this but the picture of the way in which God applies the blood of sprinkling to us, that blood that cleanseth from all sin? And, then, when the high priest stood forth in the solitary magnificence of his office, negotiating between God and the people, going in, in all the stateliness and grandeur of his solitary authority, within the veil, as it were charged with the destinies of the entire community, what was this but the faintest, but at the same time the most expressive picture of the work that our Saviour was performing for us? Oh, there was not an Israelite of those days who had sense to read these things, or more properly faith to read these things, who did not learn in it all the great lesson we have conned out of those chapters of the New Testament that speak of the sacrifice and atonement of our Master. Some there were in those days who saw through the type, and saw all that which the type signified; but these were men that walked by faith in place of walking by sight. But the great body of the people were content to look at the mere signification in the place of looking at the thing signified; to look at the type in place of looking at the antetype; and so they worshipped a mere shadow, at the same time losing sight of the substance. It was in this way, as by and by we shall see, that the word preached "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

Now, we have said to you that God, not simply content with preaching the gospel to the hopes of man, with preaching the gospel to the senses of man, was pleased over and above this, to preach it to man's understanding. Oh, it is marvellous for us to see the care and assiduity with which our God has taken pains to save us if we would be saved! Not content with holding up the lamp of prophecy to guide us, not content with sending us back to all those typical ordinances, Christ assumed himself the form of the Christian expositor. He came down into this world of ours, not simply—if I understand his mission aright—to die for our transgressions, but to instruct us in the way of salvation. He stood up amongst his own countrymen, and he pleaded the original promise. He stood up amongst his own countrymen, and made prophecy reflect upon himself. And so he connected the three great departments of teaching—teaching to hope, teaching to sense, and teaching to understanding in his own marvellous ministry. Was it not a grand spectacle, that which our Master exhibited to his countrymen, when he came and stood up amongst them to be their teacher if they were content to learn from him? As it were, spending strength and exhausting ingenuity in the very variety of his ministrations. Sometimes speaking the word so plainly that one who ran might read it, sometimes wrapping up his meaning in the more engaging form of parables, sometimes preaching his gospel in the way of illustrations, in the crowded city, in the temple courts, upon the bleak sides of the mountains of Galilee, standing upon the shores of the sea of Genesaret, in all these circumstances our Master pursued his ministry. And in what way, let me ask you, brethren? Not by holding up the promise simply, not by repeating the types, but by throwing his own commentary upon the meaning of those types. And in doing so, Christ addressed himself to the faculties of understanding, the faculties of perception, the faculties of learning, wishing to make people comprehend that which had been dimly sketched out in former ages. Perceive you not, brethren, in all this what pains was taken by God to make his people Israel understand the gospel? For Israel had all this. She had that promise ever before her; she had those prophecies ever in her hand; she had that extraordinary ministration, the ministry of Jesus himself, his own Divine voice ringing in their ears, and his own mighty mind pouring out intelligence upon Scripture. The Jews had it all.

Let us bring this part of the subject to a conclusion by simply adopting the Apostle's words. In all its varied ways was the gospel preached to them, even as it was preached to us, and to us even as it was preached to them. Nevertheless, the word preached "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

II. Now, let us pass from this examination to the second branch of our sub-

ject. We have endeavoured to make the Apostle's proposition plain, that God did preach the gospel to the Jews, even as the gospel is preached to us. Our present point of inquiry is the attempt to understand for what reason it was that a gospel so full of hope and so full of comfort, making every possible provision for every one of man's wants, bringing pardon, and peace, and salvation—eternal blessedness offered—that all this should have been offered to Israel, and at the same time rejected; for it is written here in letters that cannot be expunged, that this word “did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those that heard it.” Now, it seems to me that this branch of our subject carries us into a double investigation. In the first place, it is well for us to understand the reason why the gospel was not received by Israel. But there is a point beyond that, and that is the explanation of what the reception of the gospel is. As it seems to me, my brethren, there is considerable obscurity upon this point. Many of us, perchance, know not what it is to receive the gospel. We imagine perhaps that it is this—to agree to all the declarations, all the doctrines, all the truths propounded by the New Testament Scriptures; we think that it is this, to be simply dutiful listeners to the gospel preached, and dutiful disciples of a gospel system; and we imagine that because a man has mastered those peculiar truths that make up the gospel system, that, therefore, that man has received the gospel. But we pray you to understand this, that if that were simply all that Scripture intends by receiving the gospel of Jesus Christ, we should find that there was no work for faith whatsoever. We grant you this;—there is all the difference in the world in some respects between a man who receives the truths of the New Testament and a man who rejects those truths. You have, so far as the understanding goes, that which a man has accepted, and so far he may be admitted into the ranks of Christian discipleship. But, after all, what is the gospel of Jesus Christ meant for? It is not meant to be simply a system of instruction. If so it would apply itself to man's mind. It was not meant simply to be a system of illustration. If so, it would apply itself simply to man's fancy. It was not intended like abstract rules in scientific matters, as in mathematics for instance, to lay down dry and abstract propositions to be taken up and to be believed by men simply because they could not gainsay the system. No, my brethren, the gospel was intended for more than this. It was intended doubtless to enlighten us; doubtless to instruct us; doubtless to edify us. But the great use of our Master's gospel is this; to win the whole man—the man of understanding, the man of intelligence, the man of religion—to win the whole man into a state of subjection to Christ Jesus. If there be amongst us this evening, any whose reception of the gospel is simply of that scientific kind that I have attempted to describe, it were not too much to say that that man has never received the gospel yet. For we pray you to recollect that the object of the gospel is profit: “The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those that heard it.”

My beloved brethren, suffer me to expostulate with you, and to ask you honestly this question, what has the gospel done in the way of profit with you? Has it come down with a power greater than mortal power to your souls, and made you feel that you were sinners? Has it made you feel your own utterly impotent powerlessness to restore yourselves back to God's favour? Has it made you feel this, that none but Jesus can stand between you and God as the effectual Atoner and the effectual Mediator? Has it come down into your conscience making you to writhe under the sense of transgression? Has it done more than this, altered your habits? Is it building you up into conformity with the laws that are Christ Jesus'? If the gospel has been doing aught of this kind it has brought profit with it. But if it has only brought new ideas to your understanding, if it has only brought new thoughts to your intelligence, if it has qualified you, so to speak, to sit down and be catechised, then has this gospel not done God's intention with regard to it, for it has not reclaimed the whole man and made that rebel a subject of Christ Jesus. Have we ever thought of that strange view presented of the power of the gospel in one of our Saviour's most striking, and at the same time briefest, parables?—

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened." What means our Master by this expression than this, that there is to be a power coming from the gospel, even the kingdom of God; not in word, but the kingdom of God in power is to come down into a man's soul, and do that which the leaven would do with the mass into which it was inserted—permeate it, extending itself invisibly and mysteriously through all its particles and grains, so that if that leaven has done its work you shall not find one single crumb of that mass which has not been touched by and affected by that strange, secret, mysterious power. Thus it is that the gospel, if it be so received, will be a profitable dispensation to us. Not, as we have said before, to instruct you, not simply to enlighten you, but over and above that, to convert you. We want to lay before you this evening the tremendous example of Israel, who had the gospel preached to them in some respects with more power than it has been preached to us; and yet that word and that dispensation, with all its commanding appliances, "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Do you ask me where is the proof for all this tremendous denunciation on the part of the Apostle against Israel? We shall give you proof, plain, substantial, and intelligible. There was a promise held out to Israel, and that promise was this, that after four hundred years of casualties had passed away they were to go back as conquerors to their own land. Methinks, there was nothing mysterious in that promise. The Lord made it, and he spake it to Abraham as simply and as intelligibly as words could make it. Yet notwithstanding that, when Israel came out of the land of her captivity, and turned her Zionward, she was faithless to her Master's promise; and in her heart, too, she turned back to Egypt, aye, and in some respects turns her footsteps back to Egypt still. Was it nothing that God had beckoned them onward? Was it nothing that God had registered the promise—the promise of him whose word could not be broken? Was it nothing that he himself in the symbol of his own strange presence was perpetually going before them, their guard and their guide by day as well as by night? Was it nothing that the whole country was mapped out before them, and that some faithful hearts could say, "Let us go up and take possession for we are well able to take it?" Nay, the hearts of Israel failed at that moment. Call it what you will—call it lack of earnestness, call it lack of courage, call it lack of chivalrous daring, but the word of God will call it lack of faith. The Lord promised, and they did not catch his promise; the Lord assured them, and they did not believe his assurance; and because they did not, the sentence was passed upon them, "Not one of this generation above the age of twenty shall enjoy that scorned land."

Now, that is the example that is written for our admonition. It remains, then, for us briefly in the last place to apply all this to ourselves. You will observe that we have the reason stated here why the word did not profit Israel. And we have the same reason stated why the same word does not profit us: it is all contained in the single expression, "Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." If we are rightly to apprehend the Apostle's meaning there, it will be absolutely necessary for us to get a clear idea of the signification of that especial word, "Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." It is an expression that is taken from a fact of which we are all cognisant, that it is needful for the nourishment of our physical frames that that which we take in the shape of food should be operated upon by internal juices. It is not enough for us to take our food unless we digest it, otherwise it will not become nourishment to us. It must in our animal economy be mixed with something in ourselves in order by digestion to become nourishment to us. And, strange to say, so intimate is all this connection that that food which is called ours, is not ours because it lies upon our table, or ours when it becomes distributed amongst us, but ours because by the processes of incorporation and assimilation it positively becomes part and parcel of ourselves. You may ask any physiologist to explain that theory, and he will tell you this, that there is a curious arrangement and provision of our nature by

which that food that you take to-day some days hence becomes positively part of yourself. It becomes converted into your blood; it becomes converted into your flesh: so that, simply because the food is mixed with those internal juices, therefore that food becomes a different thing, viz., part and parcel of ourselves. And very strange and most interesting it is to endeavour to remember this, that in every department of our nature you will find the very same connection between things subjective and things objective. There are things outside of us, we shall call them objects; and these like food must be taken hold of by those internal juices if we are to create nourishment. There are things outside of us that are called thoughts or truths, and they must be laid hold of by our understanding, then to become knowledge. But there are revealed truths outside of us, and they must be caught hold of by a corresponding faculty, viz., the faculty of faith, and, then, they become religion. You will observe in this threefold process that there are three distinct things. There is in the physical process the food, the digestive power, and there is nourishment. There is in the mental process truths, perception to see truths taken by the understanding, and then reduced into knowledge. And there is in our spiritual department God's truths laid hold of by the faculty of faith, and digested into religion. The man who has no faith has no digestion of God's truths; and so, in the Scripture language, he is not nourished, built up in the word. And, now, we have a plain reason why it is that men may be under the most exuberant and lavish appliances of religion, and at the same time not be religious; that a man may have his Bible and read his Bible, that a man may come to the house of God and listen to the Bible preached; and at the same time never get beyond head knowledge. No, brethren, no, until faith exercises her strange and mysterious appropriating power, the very best truths will not profit us. It is that we have prayed for this evening;—"Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life."

Now, in brief conclusion we have words of application. In the first place, brethren, we ask you again to register in your own recollections the cause why it is we do not grow in religion. Not because there is a lack of excitement, not because there is a lack of instruction, not because the means are not poured out upon us, and around us, in almost lavish profusion; but because there is a fault within, the word preached is not profiting. If all this be so, then take with you, I pray you, our second word of application. Ask God that it may be otherwise. Oh, when in the solitude of your own closet you open God's book of revelation, ask God to make it a profitable word to you. Oh, when you go to the house of God to listen to man's instruction, ask God that it may be made profitable to you. Oh, when the thousands and thousands composing this vast, astonishing congregation, come to listen to the words of a poor worm like themselves, ask, I pray you, in mercy to yourselves, that the word preached may profit you. For after all, there it is that the secret lies, not so much in the book strength, not so much in the preacher's power, as in the Spirit's blessing and influence upon the word preached. Let the prayer accompany hearing, and there will be great things done with our congregations. We shall not have to say simply that thousands gathered under this august dome, but that thousands found here their place of spiritual regeneration.

"Lord, we are weak, but thou art near.
Nor short thine arm, nor deaf thine ear.
Oh, rend the heavens; Come quickly down,
And make this people's hearts thine own."

Sketches and Essays.

HAPPY RHODA.

"And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate."—Acts xii. 13, 14.

WHENEVER this verse was read at family prayers, we used to fix our eyes on one of our little sisters who was named Rhoda; and of course it made her very nervous; but she had nothing to be ashamed of, for her namesake here was a good girl; and her history, though short, is full of instruction. I shall show you, dear children, that she was much like yourselves. There was nothing uncommon, nothing miraculous about her,—she might have been your playmate. Yet it pleased God to put her *in the Bible*. What an honour! It was not necessary to mention her, but he wished to show us that he observes what children do, as well as what men and women do, and that he has rewards for faithful "damsels," as well as for faithful ministers.

Let us ask and answer these four questions about Rhoda.

FIRST, *Who was she?* SECONDLY, *Where did she live?* THIRDLY, *What was she doing?* FOURTHLY, *How did she behave?*

FIRST, *Who was she?* Was she one of the family mentioned in this chapter?—was she one of Mary's grand-daughters?—was she an orphan niece of John Mark? Or was she a visitor staying with him for a time? Or was she a hired maid-servant? Or was she a persecuted disciple of Christ who was obliged to take refuge in this house from her angry friends?

You can choose which of these you please; I for my part, believe that she was one of the family. In those days there were not many so-called *young ladies*,—girls too magnificent to do anything but read novels, and play the piano; and whose delicate white fingers never touch a broom or a darning-needle. It was more like what it is now in the Bush, or the

Backwoods, where everybody has to be their own "help," and sweep the room before they sit down to it, and cook the dinner before they eat it; or as it is in some retired parts of this country where farmers do not keep servants, and where one of the daughters makes the pastry, and another mends the clothes, and another looks after the poultry.

So the family of Mary divided the work of the house between them; one said, "I will prepare the meals;" another, "I will do the serving at table;" and it fell to Rhoda to be door-keeper. And there was no mean-ness in such an employment: the disgraceful thing is to be idle. An in-dustrious dog is better than a lazy lion.—I would rather be little Toby and turn the spit or drag a cart, than grand old Leo in the Zoological Gardens, gaping from ear to ear every five minutes and lashing his tail from morning to night! Rhoda at her work, was as noble in her way as Candace Queen of the Ethiopians sitting on her throne! When two angels are summoned before God and told to go, one to put an end to the battle of Waterloo, and the other to watch over a baby in its cradle, the one flies as cheerfully as the other,—their *duty*, be it what it may, is always their *delight*!

It has struck me too, that in times of persecution such as these were, it was most important to have the street-door well attended, that all busy-bodies and spies might be kept out, and that none but true friends might be let in. Therefore they may have chosen Rhoda to do it, because she was particularly prudent, and knew how to say that difficult word, *no*, and could send away the Scribes and Pharisees without telling them that Mary was not at home, when all the while she was listening over the banisters.

Further, dear children, I feel sure that Rhoda was a *good* girl; if not, would she, think you, *have been sitting up till midnight at a prayer-meeting*? Careless boys and girls do not like prayer-meetings even in the day-time. I am sorry to say that they do not like things far more suited to them than prayer-meetings. I mean Bible-lessons and addresses such as this, which are on purpose for them; they would rather be moping over a fire, or staring through the shop-windows at apples and candies which they can never buy, or chucking marbles in a muddy alley.

Again, if Rhoda was not a *good* girl, how was it that *she loved Peter so much*? At the sound of his voice her heart jumped for joy,—"*she opened not the gate for gladness*" but ran back like a crazy thing to tell all the company! The fact was, she was intensely interested in the Apostle; often and often she had sat at his feet; often and often his

words had melted her to tears: And now he was going to be killed!—"I have seen him for the last time," she would cry;—"my father! my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" When therefore she went to the door and said, "Who is there?" and putting her ear to the key-hole, heard—not a faint whisper—not a gruff challenge, but the dear familiar voice replying, "It is I!—Let me in!" she was in perfect ecstasies!

So I conclude, and I fancy you will agree with me, that Rhoda was a good girl—a follower of Christ. It is just possible that she may have seen Jesus himself, for he was alive and on earth when she was an infant—it is just possible that she may have been amongst the children whom he took in his arms, and on whose heads he laid his hands! She may have received his blessing from his own lips! At any rate, all the recollections of him were fresh and powerful. Everybody was talking about him: and she determined to be a disciple come what would—she cast in her lot with the saints.

So much for the first question, *Who was she?*

Now, **SECONDLY**, we ask, *Where was she living?*

She was living in Mary's house in Jerusalem, the capital city of Judea—a city with a very large population of its own, and crowded at certain seasons of the year with foreigners. It was a large house, for it held "many;"—this no doubt was why it was selected for the meeting as "many" were expected to "gather together" that night. Who knows too, but it may have been the regular place of worship in those terrible days when the disciples were hated and hunted like wild beasts: for as yet they were not allowed to build churches, and for centuries afterwards they were obliged to spend their Sundays in "dens and caves of the earth."

This, then, is *where Rhoda was living?*

Let us ask, **THIRDLY**, *What was she doing?*

It was past midnight—past twelve o'clock, and nothing was moving out of doors except the bats and owls and the jackals in the vineyards. It was a dark night, the moon was gone and only a few dim stars lit up the sky. Everybody was in bed asleep. How was it that Rhoda was down-stairs at that hour? Assuredly it is not good for young people to sit up late. They like it, and their parents have often hard work to get them off.—It is quite a trial to them, and returning as it does once every twenty-four hours, it is a fine test of an obedient child; if you do that pleasantly, you will do almost anything pleasantly. No, no; late

hours bring early grey hairs. Many a man wears spectacles before he is of age, because he pleaded so hard to sit up "just a little longer" night after night, when he was five years old! You have heard of the old Curfew bell which used to ring at eight o'clock to order all people to put out their fires; I wish that such a bell would ring in these days to order all little boys and girls to put on their night-caps! But there may be exceptions to this rule; Rhoda was sitting up to a prayer-meeting. It was a most solemn night to the Christians at Jerusalem. Their great champion, their beloved and venerated friend St. Peter, was in the city jail guarded by dozens of soldiers and laden with chains; they had not spoken to him for days,—no one was allowed admittance. They had often "gathered together" to beseech God to release him from prison, but so far they seemed to have prayed in vain; and now the hour was drawing near which was to be his last.—Herod had arranged to bring him forth to the Jews, and slay him as he would an ox.—The executioner had been hired, and his sword was sharpened.

Some one in the secret had told the disciples; so they at once assembled at Mary's house. As the twilight deepened, you might have seen them creeping down the back streets and tapping at the door. Rhoda opened it and they passed in. They resolved to make one more earnest effort to save Peter, not by bribing—not by petitions—not by an insurrection, but by *supplication to God*. They resolved to spend the whole night in prayer to God. One by one they offered up prayer "with strong cryings and tears." Such prayers were never heard in that house before. They wrestled with God like Jacob—they pleaded his promises—they besought him, as we should beseech the Queen if our *father or mother* was going to be killed before breakfast.—They "would not let him go except he blessed them!"

This then was what Rhoda was sitting up for; this it was that kept her wide awake at midnight. Her eyes had not a twinkle of sleep in them: there was no fear of her feeling drowsy at the prayer-meeting, as Eutychus did when Paul was long—preaching.—She was too much interested in it for that; she could as easily have slept through a fire or an earthquake!

She was not doing wrong, then, though she *did* sit up till one o'clock on that night.

But now, **FOURTHLY**, let us ask *How she conducted herself?*

Her conduct was truly noble. Look at her *Promptness*. In the middle of the meeting, whilst all her thoughts were clustering round heavenly

things and she seemed to be lifted above the world—suddenly a knock was heard at the street door. Many persons would have required time to collect their ideas and recover their self-possession, but she was ready and away in a moment; no one seems to have called her—no one seems to have said to her, “Hark! there is a knock, go to the door.” She stood with her “loins girt, and her light burning!”—She said to herself, “There is a knock, I am doorkeeper, it is hard to leave these sacred exercises—I shall be sure to lose something, but I must go;” and quick as lightning she glided out of the room and was at the door.

Look at her *Courage*.

Wicked children are always cowards at heart; they know that they have done wrong and that God is angry with them, so they are afraid to be in the dark—it is full of terrors to them; they see a ghost in every white cat, and they hear a goblin squeak in every bang of the shutter. They turn pale if you only talk of a churchyard. If you propose that they should go into an upper room for a box, they instantly have a pain in their ankle; and as for looking under a bed if any queer sound has been heard, they would as soon be smothered outright between the blankets. But it was not so with Rhoda; to go to the house-door at that time of night was anything but agreeable; a knock at such an hour might well have frightened her, and most likely she had a gloomy passage to cross; but she did not ask any one to go with her; it was her business, and she went about it in “the fear of the Lord,” which overcomes all other fears.

We notice her *Prudence*.

She did not do what some foolish damsels would have done.—She did not at once open the door to see who was there, and so put herself at their mercy; but she first called out through the key-hole, “Who is there?” This was prudent of her, for it might have been some wicked person who would have rushed in and struck her to the ground. There was a case the other day of a servant-maid who thoughtlessly opened the front door at night when no one was at home but herself. She was seized by two ruffians who stopped her mouth, carried her to a cupboard, and locked her in, and then robbed the house at their leisure. I admire Rhoda’s caution therefore, she found out *who* was knocking before she opened the door.

But now, dear children, I want you to follow her to the front door and see her surprise.

“*Who is there?*” she said. Ah! *who* was there? If you had been out-

side, you would have seen a large middle-aged man with sandals on his feet, wrapped up in a cloak, with a very solemn yet withal heavenly countenance. He came up hastily to the door and knocked sharply, because he thought that all the family were gone to rest, and then he waited patiently till some of them had time (as he reckoned) to get dressed and come down. See! now he is stamping on the stone-step to warm himself; and now the keen night air catches his throat and he coughs; and now he drops his head on his broad chest and says to himself in a deep voice, "Wonderful! wonderful!"

Let us look inside again; Rhoda is at the door, and she has said, "Who is there?" and stooping to the key-hole she hears the answer, "*It is I! Let me in!*" Why does Rhoda start so at those few words?—Has a needle been shot into her ear? No! she starts, and no wonder, for it is the voice of Peter himself—the man whose name has been on her lips for days—the man whom they are all praying for! She was *confident* of it, and turning about, she ran along the passage, burst into the room where all the people were on their knees, and cried, "PETER IS STANDING AT THE GATE!"

Now this was rather thoughtless of her. She did what was unkind in leaving Peter out in the cold: She ought first to have opened the door for him and then she might have run back as fast as she pleased—Peter was very anxious to get in, especially after hearing her speak and knowing that they were down stairs—"He continued knocking."

I daresay he thought it singular: A glorious angel had come to him in the dungeon, and spoken so calmly and lovingly to him, and brought him out by the hand: The great iron gate, far larger than Mary's door, had swung back to him "of his own accord:" But now that he is at the house of his old friend, no welcome meets him and the door is barred and bolted!—No one will open it to him. I say, Rhoda should not have done this—she would not have done it had she thought for a moment; but young people are often very excitable and very fond of telling new and strange things; indeed, what actually happens is not half wonderful enough for them, they so magnify and exaggerate it till they make you believe that a mouse is an elephant, and a caterpillar a boa-constrictor. But there are excuses for Rhoda; it was such a very startling thing to hear Peter's voice. Dear children, how you would scamper if you went to the front door and heard through the key-hole the voice of some one who you thought was dead and buried!—but Peter was as good as dead and buried to Rhoda! Besides, loving him as she did, it was

only natural that she should feel beside herself at hearing his voice.—We are expressly told that “she opened not the door for *gladness*.”—Her heart fairly ran away with her; and I daresay we should all have run away after her: So we will not be flinging stones at her.

There,—whilst Peter “continued knocking,” looking at the light through the key-hole and listening for foot-steps inside—there was Rhoda in the meeting declaring to the disciples “how Peter stood before the gate!”

No wonder they thought she was out of her senses. “Thou art mad,” they all said; “Peter is under lock and key.—He is to be tried to-morrow. We are imploring God to open some way of escape for him then; and now do you tell us that he is at the gate?—*thou art mad*.”

You see, if she had at once opened the door to Peter and let him come in and show himself, all would have been settled in a moment; but failing in this, she could only “*constantly affirm* that it was even so;” and she did this with such earnestness, and she had such an established character for truthfulness, that they could not go on contradicting her. They ran out to the door, and throwing back the fastenings, there, sure enough, stood Peter! and lo and behold! all their prayers were immediately turned into songs of praise! As he made his way through the crowd, some sobbed, some shouted, some gave glory to God, some flung themselves on his neck; so that he had to hold up his finger and bid them be quiet, whilst he told them what had happened, and how graciously the Lord had answered their intercessions for him. Then he left the house again—but not, we may suppose, before Rhoda had stolen to his side and kissed his sun-burnt hand, and he had smiled upon her.

And now, dear children, having already drawn so many lessons from the story, I shall conclude this address with a single remark.

See how much you may get by hearkening!

Being the first to hearken, Rhoda was the first to be made glad by St. Peter's voice, and she became God's messenger to the whole company. Not that I would have you eavesdroppers, not that I would have you listening at cracks and through key-holes.—I call *that* regular thieving.—I do not see any difference between stealing people's words and stealing their pocket-handkerchiefs.—I trust you will be above such dishonesty; never let your ear *be* where you would not wish your ear to be *seen*. When, therefore, I say, *how much you may get by hearkening*, I refer to such opportunities as are afforded you when your elders are in conversation, or when books are being read, or when you go to church;

then "hearken diligently"—then be "swift to hear." How often have you come to hearken to your mother—your teacher—your minister; what do you get by all you hear?—Are you wiser, better, happier for it? *I am knocking at the door now; Are you hearkening?* If you are not so deaf as a post, you must hear much every day; so every night ask yourself, "What has come in at Ear-gate to-day?"—"What have I learnt by hearkening to-day?" Take a sieve and sift it—the wheat from the chaff—the gold from the rubbish. This is the way to increase knowledge: And hearkening thus, you will not only be hearers of "glad tidings" *yourselves*, as Rhoda was, but you will have "treasures of wisdom" to communicate to *others*!—*Fragments of the Great Diamond set for Young People. By the Rev. J. Bolton, B.A.*

THE EVENING STAR.

LOOKING again into the Bible firmament—looking at what may be called the Messianic Hemisphere—the period cotemporary with an Incarnate Saviour, if John the Baptist was the morning star, John the Evangelist was the star of the evening—with soul so candid—with affections so sanctified and susceptible as to give back all the beams which the Sun of Righteousness shed on him—the Hesperus of the Gospel history—the near satellite and bright mirror of his Lord, so that the Polycarp or other primitive Christian who had seen St. John could only have seen more be seeing Jesus himself. Let us look a moment at him. Dear disciple! what makes thee so unique? Why is it that when we look to Apollos we think of eloquence, or to Stephen we think of youthful fire and the martyr's crown, or to Paul we think of fervour and the cross, or to Peter we think of impetuous courage; but we think of love, and we think of Jesus when we look to thee? Wherefore, like a pearl on flame—so gentle, yet so bright—dost thou keep thy matchless station in the deepening sky? How is that—like an angel, nestled in a golden cloud—thou lookest down on a dark world so hopeful, and on a world from which thy brethren all have passed, and where thou thyself art persecuted, so kindly and so little sad? "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. That which we have seen of the Word of life declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is

with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." Oh, yes, my dear readers, this was the secret of it all. John himself was but a clod, but Jesus kindled him into a burning and a shining star, John was a sinner once, but he laid his sins on Jesus—trustfully and tenderly he transferred his guilt to the Saviour, and in doing it felt no fear, for it was not the lion, but the Lamb of God whom he beheld bearing the sin of the world away; and feeling ever after as a pardoned sinner he let in the love which his Saviour left for him. He could not account for it. Jesus had loved him, he could not tell why, but neither could he dispute nor deny it. The Saviour loved him, and he let in the Saviour's love,—and along with that love the spirit of Jesus entered. The soul of the disciple grew at once happy and heavenly, and the flame was kindled which rapidly consumed his dross, and left him bright with that unusual holiness. And so, dear hearers, there is no way to get inward peace, or give forth visible graciousness, like copying John's implicit faith, his unhesitating receptiveness. Let in the Saviour's love. You know that it is exceeding abundant—let it abound towards you. Like John, lay your head on Jesus' bosom—not a head muffled and bandaged round by doubts, and misgivings, and notions of your own, but apply there a frank and confiding ear, and listen to what Immanuel's heart is saying. What is it saying? "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven. Come unto me, and I will give thee rest. Father, I will that this one whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that he may behold my glory." Sinner, listen, and let in that love. Leave your sins with Jesus, and He will answer for thee; His blood will wash them all away. Leave your soul with Jesus—He will give good account of it—He will keep it safe to heaven. Leave your future lot with Jesus, and he will choose the very best for you—that tempering of mercy with trial which will best tend to present you faultless before the presence of His glory, and all of which you may accept cheerfully—for it comes from the dear hand of the Mediator.

LOVE IN MARRIAGE.

THERE are few subjects on which I would speak with greater emphasis. It relates to a part of the system of natural ethics which Christians are most apt to neglect, but of which the neglect is as pernicious as it is indefensible. Has it not a somewhat singular sound, to talk of the Christian

duty of permitting, in the formation of the nuptial tie, nay, of enjoining and insisting on the free play of the natural affections? Is it not widely customary for men and women, ready to die in defence of Christian principle, anxiously and prayerfully shaping their lives by the teaching of the New Testament, either themselves to marry, or to lend their sanction to marriages, when it is well known and deliberately contemplated, that no feeling of intense attachment, no love, exists in the breast of either party? Men whom it would be hard not to call excellent, regard entrance upon the married state as a part of the formal and mechanical business of life. Young persons of the other sex are, so far as one can judge, at least equally apt to look upon marriage with no sense of the fact that affection is here one with duty, and its absence a sin. Parents, again, as will occur to all, though of sincere and habitual piety, though desirous of promoting the best interests of their children, and while deeply concerned that their daughters are wedded to men of position and means, of integrity and ability, nay, of religion, will pass over, or lightly shuffle by, all questions touching reality of affection or sympathy of nature. Yet might not a single look beneath the outermost veil of appearance convince us that, with the answers practically rendered to such questions as these, is vitally and indissolubly connected the real happiness, or the bitter misery, of after-life? One would imagine, too, that it required no very penetrating inquisition into the laws of social life, to discover that, on the original settlement of such questions depend unnumbered influences, of the most intimate and inevitable kind, affecting the moral and religious condition of the community. One would think, last of all, that it required a studious and habitual opposition to the plainest teaching of the gospel, or a blindness wholly marvellous to the nature of that teaching, to persist in meeting with a direct negative the Christian view of marriage. The teachings of nature and of Christianity are here in the strictest and most beautiful accordance. Nature and experience testify, for their part, that a lifetime of cohabitation, where there is no natural, mutual, overpowering attraction, no love, is not only a lifetime of chronic suffering, an imprisonment in "polar ice," but a condition in which each noble and genial emotion is met by a subtle poison, pervading the moral atmosphere,—by a biting frost-wind, where it ought to have found the balmiest sunshine,—by chilling and withering sleet, where nature would have prepared for it gentle, fostering rain. Looking beyond the individual victims of such a rebellion against nature, to those to whom they are related as parents, the aspects of the case, holding still by the light of mere experience and common

sense, are, if possible, still more obvious and impressive. The education of the family circle, no one will dispute, is the most important of all. It may not be matter of so common reflection, that the part of this education which consists in express precepts and oral instruction is of trivial importance compared with the silent, practical education of parental life, from the responsibility of which the parent never escapes for a moment, and of which the influence, searching and perpetual, can be counteracted by no set words, however earnest and well studied. If the parents are not united by a love which, in its fervid intensity, sets them apart from the rest of the world, and causes every other earthly feeling to revolve in an orbit comparatively remote, the unity of the family circle is broken. A fatal element insinuates itself into the affection with which the children are regarded. They are taught by the presence of no mighty and beautiful emotion in those to whom they look up, to know the happiness of pure affection, to admire it, to aspire after it. For the first few years of life, the parent is to the child, with hardly any qualification, in the place of God. The home is the first temple in which man worships. The parent is to his offspring the impersonation of perfection. And if, in striving after that perfection, as the child will do almost before he can speak, he is guided by no melodious harmony of parental love, embracing his parents and uniting in himself, his whole nature, intellectual as well as moral, may from the first be stunted. The influences referred to are not such as can be minutely defined: could they be so, they would be slight. But it is impossible, on fair consideration, to deny their supreme importance. It is the enactment of nature, visible in every department of the physical universe, that the life of the parent, in its substance and its form, be so to speak, stamped upon the offspring. No discordance can enter into parental existence, without marking itself in the character and life of the child. The assumptions of mode and affectation may fall away, but the deepest nature will be transmitted. The face of the parent may be unmoved before the world; the breast may lie, sternly placid, over the beating, burning heart; but a drop of the internal agony, with all its power to paralyze emotion and embitter life, will find its way into the bosom of the offspring. And if all this belongs to the most practical and homely truth of nature, Christianity is not less but more explicit. It is strange and anomalous that ideas, so poor and dishonouring, of the formation of the nuptial relationship should prevail, considering the august and peculiar place accorded to that relationship by Scripture. The family relations are those habitually chosen to illustrate the most sublime

conceptions which are brought by Scripture before the mind of man,—the relations between the Persons of the Trinity and between the Saviour and his Church. St. Paul does not scruple to make the love entertained by Christ for his redeemed the model and measure of connubial affection. The Creator in Paradise gave this feeling the express pre-eminence over all others: the Saviour affirmed his words. It is impossible to reflect earnestly on the deep-lying and wonderful threads of connection which run through Scripture and human history, through Christianity and nature, without perceiving that the emotion, crowned by the Creator in Paradise, signally honoured by the Saviour, and measured by Paul by an infinite standard, is that which plays, in the natural world, so strange and prominent a part,—grouping around itself comedy and tragedy, the life of literature and art, the source of half the nobleness and half the crime of human history, unique in its nature and irresistible in its influence, indefinable by any, but in some way conceived of by all, and known distinctly by the name of love. It admits of no doubt that the existence of this emotion is the sign appointed by God in nature for the formation of the nuptial tie. Without this affection, the true nuptial unity is impossible: marriage, in the sense of nature and Scripture, cannot be.

THE THINGS THAT PASS AWAY.

My friends, there is one more solemn thing. If sin, suffering, labour, change, and death are among the things that shortly shall have passed away, remember, life is also among the things that will have shortly passed away; and death will be found in its place. God is a God of justice, and he is certain to set two things in everlasting contrast; the one, hell with its flames, the other, heaven with its glory; the one, hell with its groans, the other, heaven with its songs—the blackness of darkness, the glory of brightness—heaven and hell. Now, we address sinners. As a sinner I speak. Oh, look—look at those multitudes. Oh, look at those young sinners! Oh, look at those parent sinners! Oh, look at those hoary-headed sinners! How may a child speak with these? Oh, sinners, hear the cry, the cry of one saved, one whom God has hold of, and one who will shortly be dead and gone! Sinner, hear one who would see you safe in the arms of Christ. We tell you your opportuni-

ties will be shortly passed away. Preaching will be shortly passed away; prayer will be shortly passed away; pardon will be shortly passed away; peace will be shortly passed away; hope will be shortly passed away. Your day is a fleeting one; it will set in clouds, and night cometh. Your joy is a fading one; it dies—it is short-lived. Hell cometh, pain cometh, suffering cometh, woe cometh, anguish cometh, torment cometh, night cometh, and eternity cometh. How shall we address you? Oh, might the dead speak to you! Oh, that we might call upon those who are among the lost to address you! God knoweth. Let them stand up; let them stand here, and we will leave this place and go elsewhere. Oh, that the mouldering dead might come forth and tell you that all “former things” to them “are passed away.” Might we but bid some of the lost in the deep pit to come up—might we but bid the sinner in burning chains come up, sheeted with fire, and, with trumpet tongue, testify to you of the solemn, awful truths which God shall reveal! Methinks, your souls would tremble within you. Mark me, you are dying. There is not a man here, a child here, or a woman here, that is not dying. The hand of death is upon you. . . . The pale rider is after you. The arrow is put into the bow; it is pointed and winged, and it must pierce the heart. For death cometh. The judgment cometh. And in that awful day, think what thou shalt do. In that day where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? When the book is opened and the trumpet sounds, when the earth is departing and God is coming, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? When Jesus is blessing the saints and cursing the ungodly, ah, where shall you appear? I close God’s book—my time is gone. God will shortly close his book, for your time shall be gone. If I could, my outstretched hand should pluck you all as brands from the burning. I cannot; it is God’s province, it is God’s work. We warn you, therefore, to seize the present moment, to lay a mighty and tight grip—the grasp of faith—upon the hope set before you. O! remember that presently, after a few more nights and days, a few more hours and moments, these “former things” shall have “passed away.” He that believeth in the blood of Jesus shall be saved when these things have passed away. He that believeth not in the blood of Jesus shall be damned when these things have passed away.—*Guinness.*

IN THEE DO I PUT MY TRUST.

"MOTHER, what did the Psalmist mean when he said, 'Preserve me, O God! for in thee do I put my trust?'"

"Do you remember the little girl we saw walking with her father in the woods last week?"

"O, yes, mother; wasn't she beautiful?"

"She was a gentle, loving little thing, and her father was very kind to her. Do you remember what she said when they came to the narrow bridge over the brook?"

"I do not like to talk about that bridge, mother, it makes me giddy. Do you believe it is safe—just those two planks laid across, and no railing? If she had stepped a little to one side she would have fallen into the water."

"Do you remember what she said?"

"Yes. She stopped a minute, as if she did not like to go over, and then looked up in her father's face, and asked him to take hold of her hand, and said, 'You will take care of me, father dear; I don't feel afraid when you take hold of my hand.' And her father looked so lovingly upon her, and took tight hold of her hand, as if she were very precious to him."

"I think David felt like that little girl when he wrote the words which you have just read."

"Was David going over a bridge, mother?"

"Not such a bridge as the one in the woods; but he had come to some place of difficulty in his life, and whenever he was in any way troubled, he looked up to God, just as the little girl did to her father, and said, 'Preserve me, O God!' It is the same as if he had said, 'Please take care of me, my kind heavenly Father; I do not feel afraid if you take hold of my hand.'"

"O, mother, how beautiful! But God did not really take hold of David's hand, and lead him through the trouble?"

"No; but God loves his children who trust in him—who feel safe in his care—just as the father did his little daughter; and though he does not take hold of their hands, he knows how to make them feel as peaceful and easy as if he did."

"Mother, can I be one of God's children?"

"Yes, my dear. If you love him, and trust him, and try to please him, he will call you his own, and lead you all your life, and make you very happy."

"Will there be any bridges in my life? I mean shall I have troubles? Now I have not any, have I? I have not to look up to God and ask him to take care of me."

"You must not think great troubles are the only ones we have to meet with. You will have many small troubles, and will need to look to your heavenly Father to take care of you through them."

"What troubles do you think I shall have, mother?"

"You had one this morning. Sarah was unkind to you, and you were sadly grieved."

"Could I go to God with such troubles?"

"Yes, my dear; you can tell him just as you would me all your unhappiness, and ask him to comfort you."

"Mother, I am very glad we read that Psalm this morning. I think I love God better already, and I hope I shall always trust him."

"I hope you will; and if you begin when you are a little girl, you will learn better and better about him, and be far happier than those who have no such Friend to go to in trouble."

"Why, cannot everybody go to God with their wants?"

"Certainly, if they will; but a great many people never tell him their troubles—never ask him to forgive them, nor to take care of them. They did not begin in their childhood, and it is difficult to learn these trusts when we are old."

"Oh! I hope I shall learn it now, while you can help me, mother."

"God alone can help you, my child; ask him to teach you to trust him."

ALL THINGS WORKING TOGETHER.

THERE is another sense in which these material agencies are working a moral progress, and so promoting the scheme of God. Looking up at the weathercock, says the Sage of Vanity, "Woe's me for this weary wind! There it was south this morning, and now it is north! How many ways it blows, and never long the same! What's the use of all this whirl-

ing?" And if it were only to make the vane spin round, the air as well might stagnate: there were no need of such wasted power. But whilst the valetudinarian is looking at the vane, the wind is careering over a continent, and doing the Creator's work in a hundred lands. It has called at yon city, fetid with miasma, and groaning with pestilence; and with its besom of brisk pinions it has swept the plague away. It has looked into yon haven, and found a forest of laden ships sleeping over their freights, and it has chased them all to sea. And finding the harvest arrested in a broad and fertile realm—the earth chapped, and the crops withering—it is now hurrying with that black armament of clouds to drench it in lifesome irrigation.

To narrow observation, or to selfishness, that wind is an annoyance; to faith, it is God's angel forwarding the mighty plan. 'Tis a boisterous night, and Pictish savages curse the noisy blast which shakes their peat hovels round their ears; but that noisy blast has landed the gospel on St. Andrew's shore. It blows a fearful tempest, and it sets some rheumatic joints on aching; but the morrow shows dashed in pieces the awful Armada which was fetching the Spanish Inquisition to our British isle. The wind blows east, and detains James' ships at Harwich; but it guides King William to Torbay. Yes; "the wind blows south, and the wind blows north: it whirleth about continually, and returneth again according to its circuits." But in the course of these circuits the wind has blown to our little spec of sea-girt happiness the gospel, and Protestantism, and civil and religious liberty. And so, not of our islet only, but of our globe entire, and its continuous population. So far as the individual is concerned, so far as it affects the weather-index, in the wind there may be little seeming progress; nay, so far as concerns any plan which society purposes to itself, the favouring gale may shift and shift again, and the story of a nation be little better than the registry of a stationary vane pirouetting on its windy pivot; but so far as affects the scheme of God, there is an *aura* in the universe which always drives one way. Predestination is a vane which never vibrates, and Providence a wind which never whirls about. The breath of God's Spirit and the strength of God's purpose are steadily wafting our world, and all the worlds, in one mighty convoy towards God's appointed haven in the distant future.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

PAST HELP AN EARNEST OF FUTURE.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 8, 1859,

BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

(Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty, and Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's.)

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON.

"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."—
Psalm lxxiii. 7.

THE Psalm in which these words occur is altogether one of the choicest and most beautiful of the compositions of the sweet singer of Israel. We learn from St. Chrysostom that it was believed by the primitive fathers that no day should pass without the public singing of this Psalm, and it well deserves the being frequently recited; it expresses so ardent a longing after God, so abiding a sense of his providential care, even under circumstances of the greatest perplexity, and so firm a persuasion of his ultimately succouring those who trust in him, that through being familiar with it, we may hope to catch something of its heavenly spirit, and to learn to rejoice even in the midst of tribulation.

We find from the title of the Psalm, that it was composed by David when in the wilderness of Judah. Pursued by his inveterate enemy Saul, and forced to hide himself in dens and caves of the earth, David felt nothing so much as the being banished from God's house, the temple at Jerusalem, to which were then confined the manifestations of Deity, and the sacrifices required by the law. It did not grieve him that he was excluded from the pleasures and splendours of the court, and from the society of friends whom he loved, but his heart travelled to the sanctuary of God, to the holy place where the Ark was, and where he had often enjoyed sweet communion with his Maker; and, therefore, finding himself deprived of all the public means of grace; means deeply prized, because he had experienced their efficacy, he pathetically exclaimed—"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and

Mother's Magazine, June, 1859.

thirsty land, where no water is ; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." You see that even in this affecting exclamation, the Psalmist manifests his sense of God's unchangeableness. He regarded God's former manifestations of himself as pledges or promises of future ; so that to exercise memory was to animate hope. It is the same with our text—"Because thou *hast* been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." He acknowledges that he had before time been succoured—"thou *hast* been my help," but this does not make him fear that God's favour is exhausted—that he has had all his share, and must not look for more. On the contrary, it is the very circumstance of his having had help, which encourages and makes him confident. "Because thou *hast* been my help," on this very ground, if there were no other—"therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." So that, with David, to call to mind past mercies was to expect future mercies. Though he was in circumstances of great difficulty and danger, hemmed round by enemies, deprived of the resources from which he had been used to draw strength, he had only to remember how God had delivered and succoured him before, and he was at once confident that the wing of his providence was still expanded over him. Perhaps he recollected how he had been saved from the paw of the lion, and the paw of the bear—how wonderfully he had been enabled to smite down the uncircumcised Philistine—in how many battles he had been shielded, and in how many perils defended ; and then, bethinking himself that God was still the same God, he took courage, and felt it impossible that he could now be deserted.

It will be our great object, throughout our present discourse, to urge upon you to imitate David in thus using past mercies as earnest of future. And to this end we shall first show you the soundness of David's argument—an argument which infers that God would be his help, because God had been his help ; and then, in the second place, we shall have to exhort you, individually, to copy the Psalmist in expecting for the future what you have experienced in the past.

Now, you will all remember the striking words of St. Paul in writing to the Romans—"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also, freely give us all things!" The Apostle, you see, makes the great fact of human redemption—a redemption of which all men, without exception, are the subjects—an evidence that God cannot be willing to withhold from us any real good. He seems to represent it as actually incredible, that after having done so amazing a thing in our behalf—after having given up his own Son to ignominy and death for our sakes—he should deny us any less gift ; and far less must every other be, seeing that God himself could bestow nothing greater than his own well beloved Son. He thus appeals, much as did David, in our text, to a past experience, and uses it as a motive to the expecting succour in any new exigence. And, perhaps there is not the use made which there might be of the grand fact of redemption, when men are to be urged to dependence on God, or confidence in his mercy. It is common enough to refer to the providence of God, to speak of him as the Being who has watched over us from infancy upwards, and to argue that he who has bestowed upon us so many blessings, and delivered us in so many dangers will surely not forsake us if, we will trust in his protection. The argument is quite correct, so far as it goes. We find no

fault with it, except that it does not take the highest ground. There is not a solitary bounty that we receive from our God, there is not a benevolent arrangement in the whole economy of nature, from which we may not infer the Divine good will towards us, notwithstanding our sinfulness, and on which therefore we may not build an expectation that we shall not trust in vain in the guardianship of our Maker. But, forasmuch as every other measure comes infinitely short of that furnished by redemption, it is evident that we do not put the argument in its strongest shape, when we place it upon any other proof of God's love. That God should cause his sun to rise, and his rain to descend upon us, though we have broken his laws; that day by day he should minister to our wants, and seem to attend upon us with all the sedulousness of an affectionate parent, and this, too, in spite of our rebellion and ingratitude, you call this wonderful, and so it is in itself, but not in comparison with another marvel, the marvel of Christ's mediation. There is but one wonder to men, as there is but one God, and that is, that they have been redeemed by the Everlasting Word. Every other wonder fades before this, or rather, is nothing more than a consequence of this. Only let me believe this, and nothing can surprise me. That the firmament over our heads should be studded with glorious lights, that the earth beneath our feet should be enamelled with loveliness, that the valleys should stand thick with corn, that our homes may be abodes of tranquillity, that life should be made up of mercies, and that even its sorrows should minister to happiness, I wonder not at all this, even when most penetrated with the thought of human unworthiness. Mine eye is on the cross of Christ, and after that there is comparatively nothing to amaze me, whether in the magnificence of God's creation, or in the largeness of God's benevolence. But what we now desire to press upon your attention is, that we ought to make more frequent use of this great foundation of our redemption, and perpetually to argue from it, when addressing ourselves to God for the supply of any want. It is not merely the man who, like David, has been possibly delivered from the ravenous beast or the uncircumcised Philistine, who can say to his Maker—"Thou hast been my help." Every man may say it; every man, though he may not be able to trace any signal interposition, or to point to any special instance in which he has been succoured and shielded by the Almighty. Every man may say it, not merely and not mainly because he has had a share in the general providence of God, having been fed by his bounty, and guarded by his power. Every man may say it, because on his behalf, ay, as actually on his behalf as though he had been the solitary offender, did God's own Son take on him human nature, undergo ignominy, and die as a propitiation. Where, then, is the individual so abandoned to wretchedness, or where the individual so burdened with sinfulness, that he may not reason from a great thing already done for him by God, to God's readiness to bestow on him solace or pardon! Oh, it is a glorious thing, this fact of redemption, with which to go armed, whether into the hovel of misery or to the sick beds of guilt. It is a fact with which to silence all objections, repress all murmurings, scatter all fears. Tell me not that God can be unmindful of a man, because that man is worn down by misery, and harrassed by every form of trouble. Christ died for that man; and I set the atonement against all the wretchedness. Oh, child of calamity! God has been thy help; he succoured thee when about to sink hopelessly in everlasting ruin: and canst thou think that

he will forget thee or renounce thee? Tell me not that God can be unwilling to forgive a man, because his transgressions have been multiplied, and he has run a long course of desperate misdoing. Christ died for that man, and I set the atonement against all the enormity. Oh, child of wretchedness! God has been thy help. He delivered thee by the sacrifice of his Son from going down into the pit; and why shouldest thou now think that he will not pardon the penitent? It is in this way, that whoever the party with whom we had to deal, and whatever his circumstances, we would use God's gift of his own Son as an argument against despondency, and as a motive to confidence. We allow no one to maintain that his case is not included in that of those who can say of their God—"Thou hast been my help." We want no particulars of his life; we make no inquiries into his history. He is a man; and the very heavens have been bowed down in his behalf, and angels have beheld in utter amazement the humiliation for his sake of "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person." And in having helped him, God has pledged himself to hear his prayers and to supply his wants. What! redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and yet not cared for! Succoured by that mysterious Being whom the prophet beheld coming up as a warrior "from Edom, and with dyed garments from Bozra," and yet left to perish! What! Reconciled to God at a cost which the loftiest of created intelligences cannot measure, and nevertheless forsaken or overlooked! Is poverty, earthly poverty, to be set as an evidence against the riches of grace? Is sorrow—temporal sorrow—to be compared to the grief, the unimaginable grief of him "whose visage was so marred more than any man's?" Is even crime to be adduced as setting aside the testimony given by that expiation which was more than commensurate with the sins of the whole world! Oh! we can safely say to the most afflicted—yea, and even to the most profligate of our race, 'Object of Divine aid! nothing which thou canst need done for thee is so great as what has already been done.' God, therefore—the ever living God—is pledged by former benefits not to withhold from thee future. Then cast away despair. The words of David may be used even by thee. Then thou hast warrant to refer to the past as an earnest of the future, and say to him who inhabiteth eternity—"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

But now let me show you from more personal illustrations how past mercies may be used as arguments for expecting fresh at the hands of God. My brethren, if it were not that we receive blessings or deliverance from above, and then forget them, or fail, at least, to treasure them up as choice proofs of Divine love, it could not be that many after years and years of professed fellowship with God, should be so much dismayed by the prospect of some new trial, or so much disheartened by the pressure of some new burden, as though they had never had experience of the supports and consolations which the Almighty can afford. If there were anything like a diligent remembrance of our mercies, a counting up of the instances in which God has been better to us than our fears, in which he has not interceded when we were perplexed, sustained us when we were falling, comforted us when we were sorrowful, it would be hard to see how there could be any room for anxiety, whatever the clouds which might gather round our path. Let mercies be remembered, as well as enjoyed, and they must be as

lights in days of darkness, and as shields in days of peril. If I find a believer in Christ cast down because exposed to some vehement temptation, because placed in circumstances which demand a more than common share of spiritual firmness, I would tell this man that he does wrong in looking thus gloomily on the future; he is bound to look also on the past. Can he remember no former temptation from which he came out a conqueror; no seasons of danger when God showed himself "a very present help?" And what then has he to do but to gird up the loins of his mind? Despair may be for those, if such could be found, for whom nothing has been done; but a man whose history is virtually a history of deliverances should regard that history as equally a prophecy of deliverances—a prophecy from him who alone can prophecy, even God, and who is sure also to fulfil whatsoever he predicts; and what, therefore, is there to prevent his putting David's determination into practice, and constantly leaving himself beneath that Almighty protection, of whose sufficiency he has already had proof? And wherefore, moreover, is it, son or daughter of sorrow, that the discipline of suffering has not strengthened thee in faith? We might think that thou hadst never been in the furnace of affliction, to see how thou dost shrink from entering it again. And yet there are those of you who, like the three Jewish youths, have come forth unharmed, seeing that one like unto the Son of God has been with you in the midst of the flames; and it might have been said of you, even as it was said of them, that upon their bodies the fire had no power. The mother who has lost a child, and yet has been enabled, when that child was carried forth to burial, to exclaim—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord:" what right has she to be confounded or dismayed, when another child seems sickening, as though about to follow its brother or its sister? Why should the mother recoil from the new trial, as if she felt that it would certainly be more than she could bear? Let her go to the grave of her dead child, that she may learn patience in tending the couch of the living. Did not God comfort her in her former affliction? Did he not speak soothingly to her, when maternal anguish was strong? Did he not make good his own promise—"As thy days, so shall thy strength be?" What, then, has she to do with despondency? Oh! the form of her buried child might well rise before her, and look at her with a look never worn in life—even a look of upbraiding and reproach—if she fail to exclaim, as the hectic spot appears on another young cheek—"Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." The widow, again, from whom God hath removed the chief earthly prop and guardian, but who was mercifully strengthened when the eyes of her husband were closed in death, to look calmly on her boys and her girls, and to bid them not weep, for there was a Mighty One above who had declared himself the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless—what right has she to be afterwards dismayed, when difficulties thicken, and the providing for her family seems almost beyond her power, or even her hope? Let her travel back in thought to the first moments of her widowhood; let her call to mind what gracious things were whispered to her spirit, when human comforters could avail nothing against the might of her sorrow. Let her remember how she was then enabled to encourage her children: and will not her own experience rise as a witness against her, if she gather not confidence from what memory treasures; if she exclaim not to that God who

bound up the wounded heart—"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

In this way it is that I would have you live over again times and seasons of extraordinary mercies, in order that you may be nerved for extraordinary trial. We often hear it recommended that Christians should study the histories of eminent saints, in order that through observing what deliverances have been wrought for others, they may be encouraged to expect deliverances for themselves. And the recommendation is good. There is no more profitable reading than that of the lives of men distinguished by their piety. It is likely to suggest to us our own infirmity, and to animate us to greater diligence in running the Christian race, and by proving to us how God's promises have been fulfilled, to lead us to firmer reliance upon his word. And, accordingly, we have great pleasure, if in visiting a pious cottage we see that in addition to the Bible, which is emphatically the poor man's library, he has on his shelf some pieces of Christian biographies, the histories of some of those devoted servants of God, who were burning and shining lights in their own generation, and who bequeathed their memories as a rich legacy to posterity. But there is a book which we are yet more anxious the pious cottager should study—a book which he may possess and peruse, though he have not a single printed volume in his dwelling, nor scholarship enough to read it if he had; and this is the book of his own experience. This is the book on whose pages are inscribed what the Almighty Lord God hath done for himself. This is the book which St. Paul had in his keeping, else he could never have said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." There is not a converted man who has not such a book. The title page may be said to have been written on the day of conversion; and there is scarce a day afterwards, which does not add a leaf. And a page out of this book, the book of one's own experience, is practically worth whole printed volumes. It may not be stamped with so surprising a history as these volumes could furnish; but then it is the history of the reader himself, and therefore is there a reality about it, and a convincingness, which the history of another can scarce ever have. The student of the volume of memory knows thoroughly well that there is nothing exaggerated, nothing fictitious, in any of its statements, so that there is such an air of truth thrown over the biography, as can hardly adorn the narrative of a stranger, which is almost sure to seem romantic in proportion as it is wonderful. And besides this, you can scarcely put yourself into the position of a stranger. You imagine a thousand circumstances of difference which forbid your identifying your case with his, and inferring what God is ready to do for you from what he has done for him. Hence there is more encouragement in the least blessing bestowed upon ourselves than in the greatest blessing bestowed upon a stranger; and therefore on every account we may safely say, that a whole library of biographical books, and those relating exclusively to righteous individuals, could not so minister to the assurance of a believer as the documents which his own memory can furnish. These, then, should often engage his study, whether he be the rich or the poor. He should do just as David did. Doubtless David was well acquainted with the histories of Noah, and of Abraham, of Jacob, of Joseph, of Moses; and the records of these eminent servants of God were records of surprising deliverances, of Divine promises made good, and human

wants supplied. Nevertheless, when himself in the wilderness, David did not recur to these records for encouragement. His exclamation is—"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." And we would have you imitate David. We would have you give unto your mercies an imperishable character; we would have you engrave them, not upon the marble, and not upon the brass, but on the tablets of your own minds; and we would have you watch the structure, that not a solitary letter be obliterated. If, when the Israelites had won a victory over the Philistines, Samuel set up a commemorative stone—"And called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," where are your monumental pillars, covered with the story of what God hath done for your safety and your comfort? Oh! by every tear that God has dried; by every anxiety which God has soothed; by every fear which he has dispelled; by every want which he has supplied; by every mercy which he has bestowed, strengthen yourselves for all that awaits you through the remainder of your pilgrimage. Look onward, if it must be so, to new trials; look onward to increased perplexities; yea, even to the struggle with the last enemy, death; but look on what is past as well as on what is to come; and you will be enabled to say to him in whose hand are your times—"Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice."

There is a word in our text which ought not to be overlooked: that is the word "help." It is only of "help" that our text speaks—assistance in doing, rather than the doing everything for us. To help another is to co-operate with that other—he exerting what strength he has, and the assistant aiding him with more. And this, my brethren, is all we have to look for. In his dealings with men God does but help; not so working as to leave them nothing to do, but rather working through and with them as instruments—instruments which indeed could be of no efficiency, independently on the Divine agent, but which nevertheless that agent expects to respond to his touch, and which he will wholly abandon if he find them continually inert. God will save no man in idleness; God will protect no man in indolence. He saves those who are struggling for deliverance; he protects those who are wrestling with their enemies. It is not that you can struggle or wrestle by any native strength which you have, independently on God; it is that God has already communicated to every one of us some measure of his grace; and it is only while diligently using that measure that we may hope to find him helping us with a greater. Over only those who, humbly and earnestly endeavouring to keep his commandments, commit themselves implicitly to his guardianship, the Lord God Almighty may be said to extend the shadow of his wings.

And what, in the last place, are we to understand by this expression—"In the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice?" Why, it is no unusual metaphor in scripture, that of "wings," when guardianship of the most effectual kind is to be figuratively expressed. Indeed "wings" are made to denote both power and tenderness. "Woe to the land shadowing with wings," is the expression of the prophet, when calling to a people probably famous for their navies, having winged ships with which to overshadow the enemy. Again, when destruction is threatened in Edom, Jeremiah is instructed to declare that "God has spread his wings over Bozra." It is to his own people Israel, that the Lord says, when reminding them of his unwearied care for

them—"I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you to myself." And who can forget how Christ, when tears were wrung from him by the prospect of the desolation which was coming on Jerusalem, pathetically exclaimed—"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings!" Therefore, to be under the shadow of God's wings must be to have on our side Divine power, directed by Divine tenderness. Cause, indeed, for gladness and for thankfulness! Who would not rejoice in the shadow of these wings—wings to cover us in the hour of danger when the storm is raging; wings to bear us up in the hour of death, that we may mount from earth and fix ourselves in glory! Such is the privilege of the Christian, whilst he yet tarries below. And when we shall have ascended, as on "eagles wings," and gained entrance into that glorious "city which hath foundations, whose builder and Maker is God," there may still be a place for such retrospect as that on which we have discoursed. The looking back on the path along which we have passed, and gathering from the mercies with which we see it thronged fresh cause for rejoicing in the shadow of God's wings—it may be, that will be one great source of happiness through eternity; to retrace the road by which we were led, to mark the dangers we escaped, and the mercies we received, as we journeyed through life. Here we know but little of our own course. How small a proportion, in all probability, do visible dangers bear to invisible, observed mercies to unobserved. It shall not be so hereafter. We shall see the perils that were around every step, and the blessings with which every moment was charged. And who shall tell us what emphatic bursts of grateful adoration will follow on discovery of escaped danger, where we had thought ourselves secure; and of bestowed mercy, where we were conscious of no benefit! Indeed, it is not for mortal tongue to express celestial joy! But of this we may be sure, that every fresh discovery of God's gracious care of us will increase our admiring love, and with that love our happiness in God as "all in all" to the soul. Thus will life be to eternity what the past is now to the future—the repository of motive to a yet heartier joy in the Lord our God. Oh! that we may all know this by experience! Oh! that we may all swell at last that magnificent chorus, which, louder than the sound of many waters, shall celebrate the praises of him who, having guided us by his counsel, receives us into his glory.

Sketches and Essays.

NOT A CLOUD TO BE SEEN.

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins."—Isaiah xliv. 22.

CLOUDS—thick clouds—render good service in the economy of nature. They relieve the land of excessive moisture; they retain water in reservoirs until the land is ready for it; they return such water to the earth in rain when the soil is thirsty; and in countries where this is needful, they veil the oppressive splendours of the sun. Clouds do good; but transgressions and sins never do good. They do no good to the body, no good to the soul, no good to the spirit, no good to our present condition, or to our future circumstances; and, in this respect, clouds are *unlike* sins. Yet there are points of resemblance between clouds and sins. Clouds veil the sun; and sins hide the loving face of God. Clouds hide the lofty firmament; and sins conceal heaven. Clouds contract the prospect; and sins prevent the sight of all coming good. Clouds drop down in rain; and sins fall in punishment. Clouds are beyond our control; and sins committed are entirely out of our power. Clouds are dispersible only by God; and sins God alone can drive away.

God removes the clouds, and God alone. Man may divert the course of a river, and fill up the former bed; thus blotting out in certain places the river. Man may pare down portions of the hills; thus blotting out the hills. Man may raise the valley; thus blotting out the valley. Man may drain the lake, and sow it with seeds, and raise crops upon the soil of the lake's bed; thus blotting out the lake. Man may, to a small extent, alter the boundaries of the ocean; thus blotting out in some places even the sea. Man may tunnel the earth and make a highway where foot never trod. But man can neither bring clouds into the firmament, nor send them away. Moreover a man may blot out ignorance by teaching, and folly by instruction, and some good habits by training, and animal wants by the supply of temporal necessities, and captivity by

release, and disease by healing; but no man can forgive sins. The dispensation of pardon is too precious, and too important, to be entrusted either to men or to angels. The Father has given authority to pardon to his Son, but to none other. This most important matter he entrusts to his only begotten and well-beloved Son. A man, if he were entrusted with the dispensation of forgiveness, might be sleeping, or journeying, or sick, or in various ways out of reach. A man might be angry, or morose, or occupied, or unloving, when the penitent was calling for forgiveness. And an angel might take a hypocrite for a true penitent, or a contrite one for a hypocrite; or he might hesitate to forgive some chief of sinners. God, I say, keeps the dispensation of forgiveness in his own kind hand.

Dear readers, all sin is against God. When you sin against each other you sin against God—against God through each other. Above your fellow-men stands the Father of all; and when you sin against your brother, you sin against your common father. All sin is against God. You cannot injure each other without grieving and offending God. If you sin against your kindred, or your neighbours, or any of your fellows, you sin against God. All sin, I say again, is against God. And all punishment is in God's hands; and the dispensation of pardon is his prerogative. Blessed be God for keeping it within his own power! Pardon is dispensed faithfully, and wisely, for God is light. Pardon is dispensed graciously, for God is love. And pardon is given according to the Divine promise and covenant, for "God is just and faithful to forgive us our sins." "I, even I, am he that blotteth out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins."

Dear readers, the question for you, and for me, is this: "Do I feel sin to be an evil thing? Is it a grief to me? Do I hate it? Have I given it up? Do I turn my whole soul to God? Do I feel that my heart is being cleansed from unrighteousness? As I confess and forsake my sin, and turn to my God, am I trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, as my Mediator?" If I can answer these questions affirmatively, then I may enjoy the blessedness of "the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." I may listen to God saying to me, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins."

Oh! the blessedness of hearing God say, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, even as a cloud, and, as a thick cloud, thy sins!" Is this blessedness yours? Can you see God? Do you see

heaven open to you? Do you see brightness and blessedness in your future? Are you dreading punishment? Let me speak to you about "*thy sins*," about "*thy transgressions*." "*Thy sins?*" "*Thy sins*," my brother, are transgressions of God's law—of a law which is holy, and just, and good. The more you know of this law, the more prepared will you be, whatever may be your position, to call it holy, just, and good. Now, you may cavil at it, and object to it, and call it harsh, and hard, and arbitrary, and you may speak of the Lawgiver as a hard master, "reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not sown;" but these utterances are not the expressions of your judgment; they are not the revelations of your true consciousness. You do not feel all this. You, in your heart of hearts, approve the very laws which you transgress. And your sins—I say "*thy sins*"—are transgressions of God's holy, just, and righteous commandments. "*Thy sins*" are actions of thine own, not another's. You cannot put them on another. You cannot put them on father, or mother, or kindred of any degree. "*Thy sins*" are actions of thine own, not another's. There may be sins in which others share. You may have been tempted by others. But there are actions which you have fathered completely, and for which you are entirely and solely responsible—and these are what the scriptures would call "*thy sins*." "*Thy sins*" are things done, which cannot be undone—facts. You may shut your eyes to them; but there they are. You may turn your back on them, and be determined never to remember them: but there they are. And when God turns round to face them, as he certainly will do, you will see them all. There is something exceedingly solemn in the fact that our sins are things done which cannot be undone. Just as we cannot disperse a cloud, so we cannot drive away a sin, or a transgression. It is a fact with an external existence. Oh, how marvellous it is that we are so careless, and that we go on doing things which can never be undone! "*Thy sins*" are things *done*, which, we repeat, *cannot be undone*. "*Thy sins*" are all naked before God. He sees them as they are. You cover them with excuses. You put upon the clay the gold of plausible excuse, and you see your sins thus gilded; or you paint them, and look upon them in gay colours. God sees through the gilt, and through the paint, and looks upon your sins as they are. It would be impossible to him to exaggerate your sins. He never could charge you with that for which you are not responsible. He never could, by the millionth part of a word, misrepresent you. But he sees your sins just as they are. Not as you try yourself to look at them.

You try hard to look at them clothed in the beautiful garment of your excuses. He sees them just as they are committed. "*Thy sins*" have treasured up wrath against the day of wrath. Each sin has treasured up wrath against the day of wrath. "*Thy sins*," my brother—they cause and occasion all thy sorrows, especially thy inward sorrows. That gnawing worm of discontent comes from "*thy sins*." Let the dominion of sin be taken away, and that gnawing worm of discontent is slain for ever. While sin has dominion the heart must be troubled. It is impossible for the heart to be otherwise than troubled.

"*Thy sins*" cause and occasion all thy heart sorrow. And these sins must be faced by confession and pardon, or must be met in accusation, condemnation, and punishment. Look at your sins, you must. If you are not wise enough to look at them now, and here, this side of the grave, you will have to look at them beyond the grave. Look at them you must. The insolvent tradesman may foolishly and sinfully determine never to take stock, and to cast up his accounts, but he is made to take stock and cast up his accounts. By-and-by the strong arm of the law lays hold of him, and demands that he should present his accounts to his creditors. And it is so with our sins. They must be faced. We must look at them—either in confession, and in asking for pardon, or, I repeat, in meeting accusation, hearing our condemnation, and in suffering punishment.

Now, commune with your own heart about your sins. Then confess them to God. Then cry for pardon: and you will find pardon; for "every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

A RETROSPECT OF LIFE.*

FROM THE DIARY OF JAMES WILSON, OF WOODVILLE.

When a person is actuated by the love of God as well as man, when he applies the Saviour's gracious words, "do this in remembrance of me,"

* From "Memoirs of the Life of James Wilson, of Woodville." By James Hamilton, D.D. Just published by Nisbet & Co.

not solely to the partaking of the sacrament of the Supper, but to the performance of whatever he may be called upon to do, however destructive to himself—when he has respect to the recompence of reward, and remembers that the eye of the all-seeing God, for ever sleepless and undimmed, is upon him night and day, then is he truly steadfast and not afraid, then shall not his youth be joyless, nor his manhood useless, but even his old age, so often desolate, “shall be clearer than the noon-day.” I shall not say that I lived without God in the world, but I often felt God-forsaken, which I surely would not have done had I simply laid myself and all my sins and sorrows at the foot of the cross, trusting to “the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel.” I thought, in truth, far more of my sufferings than of my sins, and looked not, at least confidingly, “on him whom I had pierced.” Had I acknowledged the Lord in all my ways, he would have directed my paths, and made my darkness light. O God, may I now say, “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?” May that faithful saying be accepted, and deeply engraven on my heart, “that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,” to “blot out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us,” to reconcile the world to God, “not imputing to them their trespasses,” so that I, who was some time “afar off,” may be made nigh by the shedding of the Saviour’s blood, while I confess with my tongue, and believe with my heart, that Jesus is the Son of God, who raised him from the dead. O holy Father, may it come to pass that in the place where it was said unto us, “Ye are not my people,” there shall we be called, “the children of the living God.”

The test, as it seems to me, of a person acting upon, or being actuated by the highest principles, is this, that under similar circumstances we would again follow precisely the same course, altogether irrespective of results. But as I myself would, if I could throw myself back into former times and circumstances, in all probability follow an entirely opposite course from that which I have actually pursued, I conceive there must have formerly been, (and may still exist), as great a mixture of pride and folly in the feeling by which I have been regulated, as of true humanity and Christian wisdom.

Most people in early life are fond of building castles in the air, and are constitutionally careless at that period of their own interests; and my poor castles, however fair and glittering to my own fancy, certainly far brighter and more beautiful than anything I can now conjure up, were

in no way founded on filthy lucre. Alas ! for "gorgeous cloud-land," and the "world of dreams!" Alas ! for the difference now greater than that of light and darkness, between the confiding imaginations of youth and the actual knowledge of after-years! Romance and reality! the peaceful repose of early and undoubting affection, and then—the battle of life. Who can relieve us from the body of sin and death? vain is the help of man; may we look evermore to that rock which is sure and steadfast, and which in its serene brightness, overlooks and illumines the darkness even of the valley of the shadow of death (making death itself a shadow), and which the waters of Jordan cannot overflow. Yet in reading the word of God, although my views of God's providence and scheme of redemption were very dark, I was not without consolation, and I often dwelt with pleasure on such passages as the following—"The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." "Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." "To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." I fear, I trembled not at the "word," though my soul was disquieted within me; though broken down by my sorrows, the burden of sin was not grievous, and I lightly esteemed the God of my salvation. Though weary and heavy laden, I went to the fountain of living water, I sought not the bread of life (Lord evermore give us that bread), but endeavoured (a vain endeavour) by a dogged resolution, an obstinate endurance of great discomforts of mind and body, to withstand adversities of whatever kind, instead of looking to him who redeemeth the soul of his servants, so that "none of those that trust in him shall be desolate." For we have not an high priest who "cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities." I had great consolation then from all promises to the downcast and disconsolate, such as "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted;" and so far this was well. But did I not put my sufferings in front of my faith, and my patient endurance almost in place of it, as if I *merited* the compassionate love of God, simply, because I suffered, instead of seeking to be justified (solely as well as freely) by his grace, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus?"

That the love of God was upon me, I do not doubt, because we know

that he "first loved us," and this only shows how great and abounding is the compassionate goodness of him who calleth sinners to repentance. But that I loved God in return, or that the cross which I took up and bore, was the cross of Christ, I can scarcely believe, when I call to remembrance my anxious, dissatisfied condition, my unmanly depression and discontent, and my entire want of anything that could be called Christian cheerfulness, or actual heartfelt resignation to the will of God. In fact, I brooded over my own sufferings and distresses, instead of rejoicing in that "one offering by which he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified—the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." What marvel, then, that I was so often disconsolate, that I felt so seldom and so slightly the "joy of believing?" I laboured and was heavy laden, and was sore oppressed, with a painful constitution of body and a feeble constitution of mind; I was hedged in by difficulties on every side and surrounded by thick darkness; and yet I refused the call of the Divine Redeemer's love—"Come unto me, and I will give you rest." Had I accepted of that invitation fully and without reserve, then assuredly I might have been "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

I therefore come to the conclusion that my sufferings have been greatly embittered by my sins, and chiefly by my disobedience in not recognising, in almost any of my misfortunes, the chastening hand of a loving Father. But "if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God, how much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life!"

THE VOICE OF THE OCEAN.

Was it the sound of the distant surf that was in mine ears, or the low moan of the breeze as it crept through the neighbouring wood? Oh, that hoarse voice of ocean, never silent since time first began—where has it not been uttered? There is stillness amid the calm of the arid and rainless desert, where no spring rises, and no streamlet flows; and the long caravan plies its weary march amid the blinding glare of the sand, and the red, unshaded rays of the fierce sun. But once and again, and yet again, has the roar of the ocean been there. It is his sands that the winds heap up; and it is the skeleton remains of his vassals—shells,

and fish, and the stony coral—that the rocks underneath inclose. There is silence on the tall mountain peak, with its glittering mantle of snow, where the panting lungs labour to inhale the thin, bleak air—where no insect murmurs and no bird flies, and where the eye wanders over multitudinous hill-tops that lie far beneath, and vast dark forests that sweep on to the distant horizon, and along hollow valleys where the great rivers begin. And yet once and again, and yet again, has the roar of the ocean been there. The effigies of his more ancient denizens we find sculptured on crags, where they jut from beneath the ice, into the mist wreath; and his later beaches, stage beyond stage, terrace the descending slopes. Where has the great destroyer not been—the devourer of continents—the blue foaming dragon, whose vocation it is to eat up the land? His ice-floes have alike furrowed the flat steppes of Siberia and the rocky flanks of Schehallian; and his nummulites and fish lie imbedded in great stones of the pyramids, hewn in times of old Pharaohs, and in rocky folds of Lebanon, still untouched by the tool. So long as ocean exists, there must be disintegration, dilapidation, change; and should the time ever arrive when the elevatory agencies, motionless and chill, shall sleep within their profound depths, to awake no more—and should the sea still continue to impel currents, and to roll its waves—every continent and island would at length disappear, and again, as of old, “when the fountains of the great deep were broken up,”

“A shoreless ocean tumble round the globe.”

Was it with reference to this principle, so recently recognised, that we are so expressly told in the Apocalypse respecting the renovated earth, in which the state of things shall be fixed and eternal, that “there shall be no more sea?” or are we to regard the revelation as the mere hieroglyphic—the pictured shape—of some analogous moral truth? “Reasoning from what we know,”—and what else remains for us?—an earth without a sea would be an earth without rain, without vegetation, without life—a dead and doleful planet of waste places, such as the telescope reveals to us in the moon. And yet the ocean does seem peculiarly a creature of time—of all the great agents of vicissitude and change, the most influential and the most untiring: and to a state in which there shall be no vicissitude and no change—in which the earthquake shall not heave from beneath, nor the mountains wear down, and the continents melt away—it seems inevitably necessary that there should be “no more sea.”

THE LAPSE OF TIME.

THERE is something very insidious in the lapse of time. When you pass the frontiers of a new country, they stop you at once and demand your passport. They look to see whence you have come, and whither you are going; and everything reminds you of the transition. The dress of the people is peculiar. Their language is strange. The streets and houses, the conveyances, the style of everything, is new. And often the features of the landscape are foreign. Unwonted crops grow in the fields, and unfamiliar trees stand in the hedgerows, and quaint and unaccountable creatures flit over your head, or hurry across your path. And at any given moment you have only to look up, in order to remember, "This is no more my native land; this is no longer the country in which I woke up yesterday."

But marked and conspicuous as is our progress in *space*, we recognize no such decided transitions in our progress through *time*. When you pass the frontiers of a new year, there is no one there with authority to demand your passport; no one who forcibly arrests you, and asks, Whence comest thou? or, Whither art thou going? Art thou bound for the better country, and hast thou a safe-conduct in the name of the Lord of the land? But you just pass on—'56, '57, '58—and every year repeats, *We* demand no passport. Be sure you can show it at your journey's end, for it is certain to be needed there. And as nothing stops you at the border, so in the new year itself there is nothing distinguishable from the year that went before. The sun rises and the sun sets. Your friends are about you all the same. You ply your business or amusements just as you did afore, and all things continue as they were. And it is the same with the more signal epochs. The infant passes on to childhood, and the child to youth, and the youth to manhood, and the man to old age, and he can hardly tell when or how he crossed the boundary. On our globes and maps we have lines to mark the parallels of distance; but these lines are only on the map. Crossing the equator or the tropic, you see no score in the water, no line in the sky to mark it; and as the vessel gives no lurch, no alarm sounds from the welkin, no call is emitted from the deep, and it is only the man of skill, the pilot or the captain, with his eye on the signs of heaven, who can tell that an event has happened, and that a definite portion of the voyage is completed. And, so far, our life is like a voyage on the open sea, every day repeating

its predecessor—the same watery plain around, and the same blue dome above—each so like the other, that you might fancy the charmed ship was standing still. But it is not so. The watery plain of to-day is far in advance of the plain of yesterday, and the blue dome of to-day may be very like its predecessor, but it is fashioned from quite another sky.

However, it is easy to see how insidious this process is, and how illusive might be the consequence. Imagine that in the ship were some passengers—a few young men, candidates for an important post in a distant empire. They may reasonably calculate on the voyage lasting three months or four; and provided that, before their arrival, they have acquired a certain science, or learned a competent amount of a given language, they will instantly be promoted to a lucrative and honourable appointment. The first few days are lost in the bustle of setting all to rights, and in the pangs of a long adieu. But at last one or two settle down in solid earnest, and betake themselves to the study of the all-important subject, and have not been at it long till they alight on the key which makes their after progress easy and delightful. To them the voyage is not irksome, and the end of it is full of expectation. But their comrades pass the time in idleness. They play cards, and smoke, and read romances, and invent all sorts of frolics to while away the tedium of captivity: and if a more sober companion venture to remonstrate, they exclaim, "Lots of time. Look how little signs of land. True, we have been out of port six weeks; but it does not feel to me as if we had moved a hundred miles. Besides, man, we have first to pass the Cape, and after that we may manage very well." And thus on it goes, till one morning there is a loud huzza, and every passenger springs on deck. "Land a-head!" "What land?" "Why, the land to which we are all bound." "Impossible; we have not passed the Cape." "Yes, indeed; but we did not put in there. Yonder is the coast. We shall drop anchor to-night, and must get on shore to-morrow." And then you may see how blank and pale the faces of the loiterers are. They feel that all is lost. One takes up the neglected volume, and wonders whether anything may be done in the remaining hours; but it looks so strange and intricate, that in despair he flings it down. "To-morrow is the examination day. To-morrow is the day of trial. It is of no use now. I have played the fool, and lost my opportunity." Whilst their wiser friends lift up their heads with joy, because their promotion draweth nigh. With no trepidation, except so much as every thoughtful spirit feels when a solemn event is near, without foreboding and without

levity, they look forth to the nearer towers and brightening minarets of that famed city which has been the goal of many wishes and the hope of many a dream. And as they calmly get ready for the hour of landing, the only sorrow that they feel is for their heedless companions, who have lost a glorious opportunity to make their calling and election sure.

And so, my dear friends, we here are a shipful of voyagers, bound for eternity. There is a certain "wisdom" which, if we learn it on the passage, will secure us a welcome and a high promotion whenever we land. It is the knowledge of Christ crucified. If we know him, and are found sufficiently acquainted with him, he is the Lord of the better country, and whether we land to-night, or be left a long while at sea, he will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But from the delusion I spoke of, few set about learning this knowledge in time. Every day looks so like its brother—yesterday as life like as the day before, and the present day as hale and hopeful as either, that it becomes very natural to say, "To-morrow will be as this day, and much more abundant." And so the golden moments glide away. One is constantly adjusting his berth, and finds new employment every day in making it more comfortable or more complete; and will perhaps be so engaged the night when the anchor-drops and the sails are furled. And many more amuse themselves. They take up the volume which contains the grand lesson, and look a few minutes at it, and put it past, and skip away to some favourite diversion; whilst they know full well, or fear too sadly, that they have not reached the main secret yet. And so in various ways, instead of giving all diligence to be found in Christ at his appearing, many are squandering in frivolity their precious term of probation.

Oh, dear brethren! it is time to be numbering the days. It is time to apply your hearts unto wisdom. It is time to read—time to listen, for the great hereafter. It is time to take up that blessed book which at the outset, God graciously furnished you, and make sure of that excellent knowledge, without which you cannot see his face in peace. It is time to be seeking an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is time to be done with trifles; time to break away from silly and ensnaring company, and give yourselves resolutely to the one thing needful.

"When you can read your title clear
To mansions in the skies,
You'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe your weeping eyes."

When you can say, "I know whom I have believed"—when you can aver, "I am persuaded that Christ is able to keep that which I have committed unto him"—when you have found in the blood of Jesus a cleansing from all your sin, and in *his* merits your own title to glory—a wondrous relief will come over your spirit, and you will have no forebodings about the end of the voyage. When we announce, as now we announce, that we are crossing another parallel, the intelligence will cause you no perturbation. And should you wake up at midnight and hear the hurrying steps and novel voices which bespeak the vessel come to port, you may calmly rise and make ready, for your friend is *there*, and your title is *here*. The gospel you believe, and the Saviour you know.
—Rev. J. Hamilton, D.D.

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE.

MR. M——, on whose daily labour the welfare of his small family depended, became so much indisposed by threatening consumption, that a suspension of his employment became absolutely necessary. His dwelling was in a retired spot, remote from the village, and far from any family that could be regarded as a neighbour. The little that the wife, with the care of an infant and two small children, could earn, was carefully husbanded. The principle, "let the children first be fed," was fully carried out, which often left but the "crumbs" for the patient parents.

The merry gales of sunny October did good service to the hungry children, by depositing within their reach the ripe chesnuts, which, when boiled, made them many a grateful meal. But October, with its brilliant sunlight, was succeeded by the "grey days" of sullen November. These two passed away, leaving less courage in the mother's heart, and less strength in the father's frame. December, with its storms at length came, and the decaying hope and flickering faith of Mrs. M—— were well nigh extinguished. This was a new experience. In her youthful days she had never known want. After her marriage, comfort sat at their fireside, and thrift, as the reward of the frugal mechanic, had set the idea of poverty far in the distance, but within the past year, heralded by disease, it had entered the doors, and neither industry, economy, hope, nor faith could eject it.

Never had she felt its bitterness as now. No friends were near to whom she could apply for help or sympathy, no resources once available but had been exhausted—and winter, the long dreaded winter had come.

One Saturday night, in the early part of the month, the darkness, both within and without, was palpably felt. Together the parents tried to look calmly into the future, and to surmount by faith the trials of the present. Together they committed all to their Heavenly Guardian.

Falling snow, and a sweeping blast, ushered in the following Sabbath morning. Mrs. M—— cheerfully prepared the morning repast,—cold water the beverage—the food, a small cake made of the remains of the last portion of meal her industry had procured. The children were satisfied—and the parents too—for such frequent acts of self-denial had subdued in a degree the cravings of nature. A cup of the meal had been reserved for the use of the invalid; this was all the food the house contained. Before the hour of noon arrived, the father absented himself from the room, lest the sight of the suffering children should overcome his sensibilities. As Mrs. M—— sat by the fireside, gathering sacred manna from her Bible, her little girl came into the room, followed by the cat, who came directly to Mrs. M——, and dropped at her feet a fine plump partridge. Surprised beyond measure at this diversion of natural instinct, she could not withstand the conviction that this supply came immediately from God, and with a thank-offering in her heart, she rose to prepare it for dinner. Before this was accomplished, to her utter astonishment, the cat brought in another, and deposited it as before. A satisfying repast was soon in readiness for the grateful family, and a sincere ovation of praise and thanksgiving was tendered to him whose “are all the fowls of the mountains,” and whose opening “hand supplieth the wants of every living thing.”

WHY DO I PRAY SO LITTLE?

I HAVE been solemnly reviewing my life. Much of it gives me great pain. I cannot say that I wish to live it over again. It is all stained with sin. I see abundant cause for crying, “Remember not against me the sins of my youth; pardon my iniquity, for it is great; have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness.”

In all my folly there is nothing more unaccountable than my reluctance to abound in prayer. O that I had prayed more. I cannot justify past neglect. Why have I prayed so little?

I have always been needy, and so my case called for much prayer. My wants have been great. Even when my temporal necessities have been well supplied, my soul has often been in the greatest straits. Not a blessing is there promised in the covenant of peace, but my poor soul stood in need of it. I have been strangely self-sufficient. I have been both poor and proud, and never more proud than when most poor. I have acted as if I had all things, when I had little or nothing. God forgive my delusion, my perverseness, my aversion to prayer.

Nor have I been without special calls to this duty. Not less than *five hundred* times do the holy Scriptures mention prayer. The whole framework of religion supposes prayer to be offered. Even the systems of false religion have all enjoined it. My necessities have often been so great and urgent that I felt there was no created arm to help me. Yet I have prayed but little.

I have read and heard of others who abounded in prayer, and found it to their account. Yea, I have seen their wisdom in so doing. I could easily give a long list of such men as Paul and Rutherford and Usher and Livingston and Brainerd and Martyn, whom nothing could hinder from abounding in this duty. Why do I not follow so good examples?

Moreover, I have not been without experience of the pleasure and profit of calling on the Lord. I must say that when I have had most of the spirit of prayer, I have seen my happiest hours. Some answers to my prayers have been speedy, merciful, and well suited to lead me on to further cries for supplies. Yet I have not been aroused to such earnestness or to the formation of such habits of devotion as might have been expected. Why do I pray so little?

I read many great promises made to prayer; not one of them can fail. They are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," are but specimens of the sure engagements of the Lord. Why do I not more heartily believe his word, and trust his grace?

Nor do I regret any time that I ever spent in hearty prayer. I have been often refreshed in the duty. It has been a relief to tell all my sorrows to my sympathising Saviour. Indeed, but for prayer I should long since have perished by the hand of mine enemies. I should have been drowned in sorrow, or swept away by temptation, if I had

had no access to the mercy-seat. Why then am I so little inclined to prayer?

I shall need much more than I have yet received. I shall need a good foundation against the time to come. I shall need grace to die the death of the righteous. My sanctification must be carried much further, or I shall still have spots and blemishes that will exclude me from heaven. I must grow more in the divine image and in confidence in Christ, or I cannot have boldness in the day of judgment. Lord, increase my faith and every grace. I am surprised that I pray so little, when I have so great, so solemn events before me, while my preparation for them is at best but scant and partial.

Why then do I pray so little? I see no good cause for such strange neglect. My reluctance to abounding in supplication must be based in unbelief, in that mystery of iniquity which I can never solve. O Lord, melt, subdue, purify my heart. Help me to call on thee. Teach me to pray, as John could not teach his disciples. Give me "the Spirit of grace and supplication."

GOD'S PLAN OF YOUR LIFE.

NEVER complain of your birth, your training, your employment, your hardships; never fancy that you could be something if only you had a different lot and sphere assigned you. God understands his own plan, and he knows what you want a great deal better than you do. The very things that you most deprecate as fatal limitations or obstructions, are probably what you most want. What you call hindrances, obstacles, discouragements, are probably God's opportunities; and it is nothing new that the patient should dislike his medicines, or any certain proof that they are poisons. No! a truce to all such impatience! Choke that devilish envy which gnaws at your heart because you are not in the same lot with others; bring down your soul, or, rather, bring it up to receive God's will and do his work, in your lot, in your sphere, under your cloud of obscurity, against your temptations; and then you shall find that your condition is never opposed to your good, but really consistent with it. Hence it was that an apostle required his converts to abide each one in that calling wherein he was called—to fill his place till he opens a way, by filling it, to some other; the bondman to fill his house of bondage with love and duty, the labourer to labour, the woman to be a woman, the men to show

themselves men—all to acknowledge God's hand in their lot, and seek to co-operate with that good design which he most assuredly cherishes for them.

There must be a complete renunciation of self-will. God and religion must be practically first; and the testimony that we please God must be the element of our peace. And such a disciple I have never known who did not have it for his joy that God was leading him on, shaping his life for him, bringing him along out of one moment into the next, year by year.

How sacred, how strong in its repose, how majestic, how nearly divine is a life thus ordered! The simple thought of a life which is to be the unfolding, in this manner, of a divine plan, is too beautiful, too captivating to suffer one indifferent or heedless moment. Living in this manner, every turn of your experience will be a discovery to you of God,—every change a token of his fatherly counsel. Whatever obscurity, darkness, trial, suffering falls upon you; your defeats, losses, injuries; your outward state, employment, relations; what seems hard, unaccountable, severe, or, as nature might say, vexatious,—all these you will see are parts or constitutive elements in God's beautiful and good plan for you, and, as such, are to be accepted with a smile. Trust God! have an implicit trust in God! and these very things will impart the highest zest to life. If you were in your own will, you could not bear them; and if you fall, at any time, into your own will, they will break you down. But the glory of your condition as a Christian, is that you are in the mighty and good will of God. Hence it was that Bunyan called his hero Great Heart; for no heart can be weak that is in the confidence of God. See how it was with Paul: counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge; enduring, with sublime patience, unspeakable sufferings; casting everything behind him, and following on to apprehend that for which he was apprehended. He had a great and mighty will, but no self-will: therefore he was strong—a true lion of the faith. Away, then, with all feeble complaints, all meagre and mean anxieties! Take your duty, and be strong in it, as God will make you strong. The harder it is, the stronger, in fact, you will be. Understand, also, that the great question here is, not what you will get, but what you will become. The greatest wealth you can ever get will be in yourself. Take your burdens, and troubles, and losses, and wrongs, if come they must and will, as your opportunities, knowing that God has girded you for greater things than these. Oh! to live out such a life as God appoints, how great a thing it is! to do the duties, make the sacrifices, bear the adversities, finish the plan, and then to say with Christ, (who of us will be able?). "It is finished." *Dr. Bushnell.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

PRESENT WITH THE LORD.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 8, 1859,
BY THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON DAVIES, M.A.
AT CHRIST CHURCH, RAMSGATE.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."—Numbers xxiii. 10.

DAVID, in order to comfort himself in a time of trial and affliction, expresses himself thus: "God has spoken once, and twice I have heard the same, that power belongeth unto God; and to thee also, O Lord, belongeth mercy." God has exhibited his power in manifold ways, and particularly, dear brethren, in the midst of this congregation. Within a very short space of time two, emphatically, unmistakeably, his own dear children, have been removed from the midst of us. One was little known, the other well known. And shall we not say, that while he "has spoken once and twice" by his power, "to him belongs mercy?" Has he not a right to all that grows in his garden? Shall we find fault because the owner comes forth and plucks this flower, that he removes this plant and the other to a better and more genial soil? No. We shall say, there is mercy in this dispensation. The Lord has remembered his goodness towards the individuals removed, and he has not left desolate those who remain. We may every one of us, therefore, say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

These words are peculiar. They issue from the mouth of a most godless rebel, a dire enemy against Jehovah: and yet he could recognize the blessedness of the righteous in their latter end.

Now, dear brethren, I shall first bring before you the persons envied—
THE RIGHTEOUS; and then,

Secondly, The period when they are PECULIARLY ENVIED—when they die.

O, may God, of his infinite mercy and goodness, make this to us a period of rejoicing! May the Lord speak to us this morning through his word! Oh, that it may bring salvation, comfort, edification, through Christ our Lord!

Mother's Magazine, July, 1859.

I. We bring before you the persons envied—THE RIGHTEOUS.

Now, I have no doubt that in Balaam's mind "righteousness" had a very limited range. He probably, as the mass of mankind, conceived that if the conduct in the main was moral—if there were some religious duties performed—if a man was in esteem among his fellow-men, he was fit to die and to depart. We are very anxious to disabuse the mind of those who hear us of such an idea. The righteous are not simply those that the world esteems such. There is a marvellous work of grace to be wrought before you or I can be righteous. We are born in sin, children of wrath, rebels from our youth up, in enmity against God, hating righteousness, and loving transgression. I am very anxious, dear brethren, to bring before you this part of the matter. I would we should all die the death of the righteous. But, Oh! my dear brethren, understand fully who these righteous are. They are not such as I have described, and such as we doubt not Balaam might have conceived were quite ready to depart and were to be envied. Who are they? "There is none righteous; no, not one:" none who could appear thus before God, because of conduct pursued in life, or of disposition exhibited in this world. Take parallel passages. Those whose death we have reason to envy, and to know is blessed, are described in scripture thus: they "die in the Lord." I have often had occasion to press upon your attention that little word "in." They are not blessed, because they die "of" the Lord; that is, attached to him by an outward profession; they are not simply blessed because they have the name of Christ stamped upon them, and because of that which they declare before men; they are *in union* with Christ; Christ and the persons whose death we envy are one. There is no separation; the union is as close as the living man's body and his spirit. "We being members are one body;" and "the body" is said to be—what! "Christ." Dear brethren, those are blessed who by the operation of the Holy Ghost are "quickened together with Christ;" Christ lives in them, and therefore they shall never die; the body goes into the grave, but the union is not broken; the spirit still "sleeps in Jesus." Bear that in mind, dear brethren; unless there be wrought upon you and me, by the Holy Ghost, this vital, spiritual, eternal union with Christ, there is nothing in death but that which is alarming. Take another passage: "These all," saith the Apostle, speaking of the patriarchs and saints of old, "died in faith." How had they lived! They had lived in faith. It was not that there was at the moment of their dying some certain thing wrought in their mind and spirit that enabled them to be recumbent upon the finished work of Christ then. They lived in faith;

they lived trusting solely to Christ for salvation, for life, for glory ; they lived by faith ; they had no strength but Christ, no comfort separate from Christ ; Christ was to them all in all. They come to die ; there is no effort ; they die as they lived ; they are reposing still upon him with whom they walked and upon whom they leaned ; they died, therefore, "knowing whom" they had believed, persuaded that he was able to keep that which was committed unto him against that day." It is the calmest thing possible ; it is more calm to die than to live ; much more peaceful to depart believing, than to wrestle and conflict believing. Therefore, mark you, the righteous are those who live "by the faith of the Son of God," and therefore "die in faith," still resting for all they need upon him who is the Great Head of the Church, "the Saviour of the body." I need not say that where there is this faith, it "worketh by love," and there is devotion to him who has so loved the soul as to give himself for it ; and in proportion as faith is simple, realizing, steadfast, the life is devoted, only desiring the Lord's glory.

II. But we come now to consider the period when these persons are PARTICULARLY ENVIED.

"Let me die," says Balaam, "the death of the righteous." No man can stop short, and express sincerely the former part of the clause without the latter. No man says, "Let me die." Death, dear brethren, is not a thing coveted of itself. There is something tremendous to all in the view of death ; there is something in the very act of dying that never yet came fraught with comfort to any soul. It is very awful, and that which makes it, brethren, very solemn, is this—it is certain. I see a man in abject poverty, I see another rich. I see another suffering in body, and I myself am free. I see another dying. Ah ! must I die ? I may endeavour to put away from me this frightful thought ; but I cannot put away from me the certainty that my spirit will leave this body, and that this body will go down to the grave. It is appointed ; it must be. Tremendous thought ! There may be evils in the world that will never overtake me ; but *this* must ; the cold hand of death must be laid upon me. And that great change is irrevocable. Only let one of us go on the other side, as our dear sister has lately—although not in the same place—and I can imagine him saying, 'I find there is a flaw in the faith I thought I possessed. I thought I believed. Remedy it I cannot. I have made a mistake ; I have perished for ever. I heard, that "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven ;" and I thought I was. I was baptized, and I made a profession, and men

told me all was right. Ah ! I find the great change has never been wrought. Cannot I go back again and have it wrought ? Oh, no. "Where the tree falleth, there it shall lie." Ah ! dear brethren, I wish to have my own soul impressed, and I wish to impress your soul with the fact, that you take that step, or God makes you take it, and there is no repentance in the grave whither you are going. It is therefore a solemn thing to die ; it is a solemn thing to have our fate for ever irrevocably sealed, and the holiest look upon death as an awful event, an event itself that needs to be approached with great humility, rather with trembling than with exulting satisfaction.

But if it stopped there, the passage would be incomplete. The desire would not have been simply, "let me die the death of the righteous:" Balaam added, "let my last end be like his." He had light sufficient to know that although he was seeking after covetousness, and living after the flesh, yet he should prefer not having pursued such a course when he came to die ; although he might despise, and his heart curse the people of God, yet when he came to die, he should prefer being as they were. Doubtless he knew that there were some that would escape wrath ; doubtless he knew that there were some that would be calm and placid in the hour of death, full of rejoicing hope in the prospect of eternity.

He envied them, we believe, dear brethren, on a twofold ground. He envied them, because of the present advantage they had in dying. All of the Lord's saints, dear brethren, when they depart, do not, as you may be well aware, depart triumphantly ; I will give you another word—they depart *dependingly*. Although there may with some be clouds, and the sun be not seen in its brightness, yet they all have their rest upon the finished work of Christ set forth in the gospel. They are not all privileged as our dear sister last taken from the midst of us was privileged. I never saw victory accomplished so quickly by the Lord and Captain of her salvation. There was no excitement. Oh ! it was a blessed death to witness. There was no attempt to bring forth certain passages that they might be striking upon the ear of those who heard her last words : there was no effort whatever ; there was no rushing after certain texts of Scripture on which to fasten her soul for comfort : there was perfect peace, and more than perfect peace—a triumphant peace. As expressed to me, the wonderful thing that seemed to be brought before her was *the nearness of her Lord's presence*. She seemed to look upon it as a high honour and a particular mark of favour bestowed upon her, that she was to be taken where He was, to enjoy His presence and His bliss. We shall not repeat her words ; but the impression

upon my own mind was this, that never did I witness one who seemed so calmly to die in the faith of Jesus Christ, and with the utmost satisfaction that with Him "all things were hers, present and to come." Her soul was so wrapped up in the prospect of what awaited her, that there was little or no reference to the ties left behind. She never thought, "What will become of my motherless children?" The Lord had given them, and the Lord would care for them. Her great care and desire seemed to be that her departure might be blessed to souls, as it was indeed a blessing to herself; that those who remained might perceive that life was most uncertain, that the possession of Jesus was most important. One thing was gratifying, showing how her soul was wrapped up in the Lord's glory, while she was going to see that glory above: she trusted that the event would be blessed to the soul of her husband, that he might be more and more strengthened in the inner man, and be made more and more useful to souls in the ministry to which the Lord had called him. Her end, I need not say, was peace. It was triumphant peace. Her countenance at all times beamed with happiness and delight: now though pale, there was such a smile of satisfaction and delight upon that countenance as I never saw before. And whence was it, dear brethren? She was "dying in the Lord." She had no question at all in her own spirit as to whither she was going. She knew for what purpose she was redeemed,—that she might be with the Lord, see his glory, and be a jewel in his diadem for ever. I think, dear brethren, if any one had been present to witness, as those who were around her death-bed were privileged to witness, the departure of a saint indeed, the hardest heart would say, "O, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

But I conceive there was in the speech of Balaam not only reference to the *manner* of dying, but also to the *result* of the righteous dying. Ah! it is good for us to contemplate this. There is the grave; like Jonah's whale, it swallows us up, and what does it do? It carries us to land, improved and benefited by the process. The young Israelites, in Nebuchadnezzar's time, when in the fire, saw the Lord, and enjoyed his presence and his comfort. Dear brethren, that which may appear damaging, can easily be made advantageous. Observe the Red Sea; it is "a way for the ransomed to pass over." And this is all that death is to the believer; the waters separate, the ark of God abides in the midst of the waters, and the ransomed go through to the land of promise that the Lord has prepared for them. We cannot tell what is the bliss of one departed. We only know it by negatives; there is only one positive declaration, which we shall reserve for the last.

What are the negatives that make the death of the righteous to be desired ! First, there is *no corruption*. Ah ! dear brethren, the righteous know what corruption is ; the evil always present, and the soul pressed under the body of sin. They cannot pray, but corruption is keeping them down ; they cannot love, but corruption is endeavouring to turn them aside to other objects ; they cannot serve, but corruption is endeavouring to persuade them that by serving they can save themselves. Ah ! there is no corruption there. One dying moment does more to remove corruption, and to withdraw its power, than hours and days of watching, praying, and wrestling. In an instant that which clogged the soul ceases, and not till then. It is like the ivy that has got into a house ; it penetrates every chink ; it spreads over the whole wall ; we trim it, we endeavour to correct it ; but nothing will do but bringing the edifice to the ground, and then the ivy ceases. So, dear brethren, is it with corruption : it cleaves to us, and it will cleave, but the moment the body is found to be a corpse, and the spirit has fled, there is no more hindrance from corruption, and the spirit mounts to the presence of the Lord free from all impediments.

There is *no Satan*. No ; he was “cast out,” and never does he come in with any fiery darts to wound the soul’s peace. You and I know how we hate ourselves, how we loathe ourselves for having certain unkind thoughts respecting Jehovah, and imaginations that enter in contrary to him, how we detest ourselves for our rebellion and murmuring. Satan will not be there. I see a foolish boy trying to put out the sun with a snowball ; he cannot reach it ; it melts and falls to the ground. As secure as the sun is from the violence of the snowball, so in that kingdom will our spirits be from all the temptations and suggestions of Satan.

There is *no woe* there. Our dear sister was exceedingly susceptible of pain and suffering from seeing the cares and afflictions of this present life. These things, we need not say, have all ceased. There is no more anxiety respecting her husband’s health, no more anxiety respecting the children’s nurture, no more anxiety respecting the servants’ souls ; there is no more weeping because of men’s hardness of heart and contempt of the Lord and his gospel. All care ceases. Empires may tumble and rush into ruin ; it does not disturb the repose of the soul of our dear sister. Yea, the church may be removed from the land, and the whole be desolation ; she would be unmoved in that kingdom. Friends and relatives pass away ; there is no tear there. Brethren, there is nothing that will dry up that to which you and I are heirs—sorrow, afflictions, and tears—but the blessed dust of the grave. Then

there will be an end of all trouble, all anxiety, all woe, and the tears will be wiped for ever from our eyes.

I speak next of that which is positive. The only thing that Scripture tells us emphatically is, "absent from the body, *present with the Lord*." This, even though "seeing through a glass darkly," was her consolation and support in the midst of all the trials and conflicts of the world—the Lord's presence and the Lord's favour. How many prayers had she offered up, think you, that the Lord would shine upon her soul and upon the souls of those she loved! How often, think you, had she wrestled in prayer that the Lord would manifest Himself to her as one that loved her and prepared for her a kingdom! There is no more wrestling, there is no more exertion; the messenger came and said, "Come to your Father's presence; see your beloved Lord, Him who loved you and gave Himself for you. Come, and from this moment be, without interruption, ever with the Lord in the full enjoyment of your spirit." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;" that when I lay down this, my mortal body, my redeemed, well-beloved spirit shall be with the Lord that bought it, the Lord of light!

But her happiness is not yet complete, dear brethren; do not think it. She is waiting "under the altar,"* for the period when that sacred body shall be gathered together, now taken in charge of by the grave, and shall become "a glorious body," like that of her Redeemer. "Then the last enemy will be destroyed." Now, it has somewhat of an enemy's look; the beloved object of many a one is taken away; but hereafter it will be forgotten, and in the presence of the Lord, and in company with all the redeemed we shall be able to sing in triumph, "Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now, brethren, I want to make an application of the subject. I dare say many here do not regard it, and many others disbelieve it, that my tears, since this event has happened, have been not so much for her that is departed, as for many of my own congregation who are not ready to depart, who probably say, "Let me die the death of the righteous," and there leave the matter. Dear brethren, as God has come in the midst of us, and taken away two sanctified ones, his own children, he may very soon come and lay his hand upon one that is not sanctified, of whom we shall not have to speak

* Rev. vi. 9.

as we are speaking this day. Now, I beseech you, remember what Balaam said, "The Lord is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it?" Take with you one or two sayings of our Lord, and let them be treasured up in your mind, and do not give your soul rest until you find them a source of comfort. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." I give you another, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." I leave the matter with you, dear brethren, I beseech you do not let this voice pass away. It has spoken loudly to you. Here is our sister one Sabbath-day enjoying the Lord's communion in the partaking of bread with his people, the next a corpse; one Sabbath-day labouring, the next removed. "Be ye also ready." It was not age that overcame her; it was not a lingering disease that brought her life to a close: it was, as it were, in a moment, in the morning of youth, or at least in mid-day, the Lord plucked his flowers. "Be ye also ready, for in an hour that ye know not the Son of man cometh." Do not put it away, I beseech you. Oh, that I could summon each one of you before the Lord at this time, and impress this one Scripture upon you, "Be ye also ready."

Then, to those who are weeping, let me say consolation is abundant. You "sorrow not as others who have no hope," you sorrow simply because flesh must have its vent, simply because you yourselves are deprived of a certain comfort. To dry your tears, look to the state of her who is departed. If continued in the world, sorrows, afflictions, and trials awaited her. "The righteous perisheth;" we fear that "no man lay it to heart; the righteous are taken from the evil to come." Therefore, while you have consolation in her departure, comfort yourselves rather with these words, "Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Will he bring *you*? I trust that they that mourn look for that period when the Lord shall come and gather the whole of his church into one, and "present it a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." As we say in our funeral service, "O Lord shortly accomplish the number of thine elect, and hasten thy kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul in Thy eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Sketches and Essays.

THE FOUR PEACE-TEXTS.

The God of peace; peace with God; the peace of God; God our peace.

THESE are not four separate things, but, four things closely knit; one, yet distinct as were the four parts of the one mighty stream of paradise, or four branches of one spreading olive.

I. *The God of Peace.*—In him peace has its dwelling; to him it belongs; and it is he who bestows it. It was as the Son and Messenger of the God of peace that Jesus, in the days of his flesh, said to the sea, peace, be still; and to his disciples, "peace I leave with you." In no common way, and in no common degree, must this peace belong to him when he takes to himself the name of "the God of peace." As "the God of all grace," he is "the God of peace;" for grace and peace are linked enduringly together, the one being the fountain and the other the stream. To know God as the God of all grace, is to know him as the God of peace. He who looks at the sun enjoys the light, of which it is the source. So he who knows the grace receives the peace, and he who knows not the grace cannot have the peace, any more than a man can retain the sunlight, and yet shut out the sun.

It is by this name that the Apostle Paul often addresses the churches. Is it God's presence that he asks for them? His prayer is "*the God of peace be with you all*" (Rom. xv. 33). Is it the promise of this presence that he gives? His words are "*The God of peace shall be with you*" (2 Cor. xiii. 11). Is it of their victory over Satan that he assures them? His assurance is, "*The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly*" (Rom. xvi. 20). Is it for their sanctification that he prays? His petition is, "*The very God of peace sanctify you wholly*" (1 Thess. v. 23). Is it their perfection that he seeks? He pleads, "*The God of peace make you perfect in every good work*" (Heb. xiii. 20).

Most precious to us should be this blessed name! "They that know thy name shall put their trust in thee;" and this is one of those special

names of God, which he has given us as the basis of our trust. It is with such a name as this that the sinner's confidence begins; and it is with this that the saint's confidence goes on unto perfection.

II. *Peace with God.*—It is "reconciliation" that this expression specially refers to—reconciliation by the blood of the everlasting covenant; reconciliation through him who is our peace, and who has made peace by the blood of his cross. From the God of peace this peace with God directly flows. This character of God is so intimately connected with blessing to the sinner, that the simple recognition of it suffices to bring about the reconciliation. All the steps needful for accomplishing it have long since been taken—when the great Peacemaker died upon the cross; and it only remains for us that we enter on the possession of the inheritance then secured—an inheritance of peace! The mere fact of God being the God of peace was not enough; the sinner might still have been without peace and reconciliation. But as the property of light is to stream out upon darkness in spite of distance and hindrance, so the character of God, as the God of peace, must, by necessity of being, flow out, refusing to be pent up, or to yield to any obstacles. The star is still the star, though clouds float across our atmosphere, and wrap our earth in dimness. Its light is for a season pent up, but that is all. It still streams out in tranquil brightness above this shadowy region; and it needs but the strong wind to drive away, or the increasing heat to absorb, these vapours, and the star will be once more to us all that it once was, when it passed up the undimmed blue of heaven. The God of peace is still the God of peace, whatever sin may have done to hinder his peace from flowing down to us. And when the reconciling blood of the great sacrifice has done its work in removing that which hindered, then the peace revisits earth, and the "God of peace" brings about "peace with God."

The message that comes from the God of peace is the "Gospel of peace" (Eph. vi. 15); and the messenger goes forth from him "preaching peace by Jesus Christ (Acts x. 36); "so that being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). To be out of peace must arise from that evil heart of unbelief, which either mistakes or refuses to recognise the character which God, in the person and cross of his Son, has given us of himself. For to know the God of peace, and yet not have peace with God, is an impossibility. Had God revealed himself at all as the God of peace, many of us could hardly have been darker or sadder than we are. Is not this strange, and does it

not show where the root of the evil lies? A God unknown, and a God not believed in leave the sinner equally dark and suspicious. And what conclusion can we come to in regard to many of the troubled ones amongst us, but that they are so putting away from them the knowledge of God, and putting away from them the revelation of his gracious name, that they have brought themselves into the exact condition of those to whom he has never revealed himself at all? God is not the God of peace to them; and hence, of necessity, they have not peace with God.

III. *The Peace of God*.—It is for this that the Apostle pleads, when he asks, “the *peace of God* which passeth all understanding” may keep the hearts of the brethren (Phil. iv. 7); and it is to this that he exhorts when he says, “Let the *peace of God* rule in your hearts” (Col. iii. 15). This peace, then, is something which God himself gives; and, as being his gift, it is called his peace. Pardon is God’s, because it comes from him; so peace is God’s, because he bestows it. But the peace of God must mean more than this. It is that peace which he himself possesses—which dwells in him, and fills him. It is his own peculiar peace. And just as Christ speaks of “My joy,” and “My peace,” evidently referring to something which was specially and peculiarly his own, so does God speak to us of his peace. And as the love of Christ is said to be a love “that passeth knowledge,” so the peace of God is said to be a peace that “passeth all understanding.” It is as profound and as perfect as himself, in whom it has its dwelling. Man’s peace is like the atmosphere in which man lives, ever shifting and changing, liable to be disturbed by storms, or to stagnate into oppressive sultriness. God’s peace is like the blue of the heavens above, which changes not, which moves not, and which no tempests can ruffle. Earth’s peace is like earth’s sea, tossing up and down, ever at the mercy of each hour’s blasts. Heaven’s peace is like “the sea of glass” (Rev. iv. 6), no wave, no ruffle, no foam.

O man of earth! this is surely just such peace as you stand in need of. It suits a stormy world and restless heart like yours. O take it as God’s free gift to you. Take it as something specially his own, which he would fain share with you. Take it, and be at rest. It will do more for calming and comforting you than anything of earth has ever done. It will be within you a perpetual tranquillity, making you immoveable in the midst of warring winds; nay, insensible to their disturbance and vexation. To be “filled with all joy and peace in believing,” is the great secret of rest and calm to the soul. The “peace of God,” added to “peace with God,” will make you as steadfast as blessed, in a tumultuous world like this of ours.

IV. *God our Peace.*—It is of Christ that this is specially said; but what is true of the Son is true of the Father also. Of the Son we say, "He is our peace" (Eph. ii. 14); and of the Father we can say the same, he is our peace. Certainly of the Son this may be said in a peculiar sense, for he is the Peace-maker, the Mediator, the Reconciler. But it matters little whether we say it of the Father or the Son. God is our peace; and this is much.

To say that God gives us peace is much; for it assures us that we shall certainly have something which he calls peace, whether great or little. To say that he gives us his own peace, is to say much more, for it tells us the Divine nature of the peace which he bestows. But to say that God is our peace, is to say more than all, for it is to tell us not only that we have a peace, and a Divine peace, but that this peace is God himself. To say that God defends us, is to say much; but to say that God is our fortress and our shield, is to say much more. Yes, God is our peace. He is our joy. He is our treasure. He is all and in all. Such is our God!

What must it be to have this God for our God! And what must it be to be without him! O blessedness in having, O misery in not having such a God! O foolishness of man to lose such a treasure, to be destitute of such a gladness, to come short of such a reward! Yet no sense of disquietude, no urgency on the part of God, no good report of the peace, brought up by those who have tasted it, will avail to induce wretched man to go in quest of it, or to receive it when pressed on him!

WILL OUR EARTHLY CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIPS BE CONTINUED IN HEAVEN?

THERE are many circumstances which throw much indistinctness and uncertainty over our views of what the social condition of heaven will be. Such as these, which I can only just name:—From the language of Scripture, it is quite certain that heaven is a real place, a material abode, and not a mere state, as many are pleased to assert. But whether it be a vast and splendid cluster of worlds, or one spacious, magnificent, and almost unlimited continent of light and beauty, we are not informed. Yet our intercourse must considerably depend upon this.

Then, even if the saved of mankind were the only people there, is it

likely that, amidst the numberless myriads of our own race alone, each individual will be able to find his own "familiar friend?" But these will not be the only inhabitants of heaven. There are its nobler and more ancient nations. More than this, from its being the highest part of the creation of God, and the scene of his visible presence, we may justly infer that it is the common home and Paradise of all holy creatures, and that its society will be increasingly composed of races and families from various worlds of the universe. Does it not look as if each of us would find himself among a heaven of strangers?

Were we to be removed to heaven with our present nature only refined and made immortal, we could easily anticipate how we should feel and act; but not so. Our nature is to be dissolved to its very rudiments at death. Now, all that pertains to us simply as beings of this world, all the instincts of the body, many of our sensibilities, perhaps many of the properties which now influence the mode of our social intercourse, will be dropped, to be resumed no more. Our ignorance of what we shall be, when deprived of all these, gives much uncertainty to our conceptions of heaven.

We have scarcely any revelation of the glorified state but as a scene of Divine glory and devotional felicity. The heaven of the New Testament is strictly a devotional heaven,—perhaps to impress upon us the conviction that to be fitted for it we must be devotional. Now, we know that when the heart is deeply devotional to the blessed God, social wishes and considerations almost disappear. You have felt this in public worship. You have had scarcely a wish or a thought of those around you. The inferior affection was absorbed and displaced by the greater and the holier. Will not the visible presence of God displayed in ineffable holiness, beauty, and effulgence all over the regions of heaven, meeting us wherever we turn, surrounding us every moment—will it not produce in us an indifference to the presence and regard of creatures—an oblivion of social affections and delight? So we may be apt to imagine at first.

The Scriptures speak of peculiar rewards of grace that will be conferred in heaven on those who have possessed peculiar grace on earth. The present differences in piety are immense—so will be the rewards. Now, will not a superior position of these rewards—which may well be supposed to consist in transcendent dignity of rank, station, employment, nearness to the throne, the performance of high commissions in heaven and abroad in the universe—put a wide separation betwixt many who have been closely united on earth, and who would wish to preserve their friend-

ship and intercourse for ever? Will a dignified personage, high in honour through the celestial realms, descend from his lofty sphere and society to visit and converse with his former friend, who, far below him in piety, dwells in one of the remote celestial villages among the common people of heaven?

The Scriptures themselves give us no direct information respecting the social constitution of heaven. The whole system of life there, apart from devotion, is left to be imagined with dim uncertainty. And although they speak of it sometimes as a family, sometimes as a festal assembly, suggesting the delightful fancy that all its members will be easily observed and known, as in such spectacles on earth, a little reflection assures us that these are but images, teaching us indeed what the spirit of heaven will be, but not intended to afford us precise and definite information respecting the laws of its intercourse.

It is well to see the difficulties of a great subject: they awaken curiosity; they set the mind to work; they break up the fancies of ignorance, and prepare us to welcome with more delight the certainty that may be attained.

We are, however, acquainted with two or three facts, distinctly established, by the aid of which we may work out with luminous certainty many large and beautiful problems respecting our social prospects in heaven. Such facts are these—the permanent properties of our nature, the certain assurance we have that heaven is the world of perfection, and those inspired declarations respecting heaven which, although they assert nothing directly of our future mutual recognition, or of the mode of celestial intercourse, speak of heaven as a social state. *Memory* is one of the permanent properties of our nature. Memory will be plainly essential for the holy purposes of grateful adoration; for gratitude is, in its very nature, a sentiment inspired by memory. It will be essential to enable us to perceive the rectitude of the final judgment. Suppose the memory of human actions to be lost, the judgment of our race will appear to be a mere act of sovereign despotism. It will also be essential to the existence of conscious identity or continuous being. That memory is a permanent property of our nature is therefore certain. Now, as our friends are closely identified with ourselves, and their words and acts constitute a great part, and sometimes are among the most important parts of our own history, if we remember our own history, if we remember our own past selves, *we must remember our friends* in heaven.

A second property of our lives which we know will be permanent, is

holy love. There needs be no proof that our moral affections will be continued. The present graces of piety will be the graces of heaven. They will go with us wherever we go, and from the temper and felicity of our existence. "Love is of God; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "Charity never faileth." Against this there is no law to condemn it to death. We have seen that our present companions in Christ must always be remembered; we also see that *they must always be loved*; and, in heaven as on earth, it is in the nature of love to seek intercourse with its object.

Another established fact that will aid us in this inquiry, is the *perfection* of the heavenly state. It is true that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but we know that we shall not be less perfect than we now are. In our instrumental existence, as well as in our character, we shall "be made perfect." When Paul writes, "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away," his plain meaning is, that the present *imperfections* of our communication and acquirement of knowledge shall vanish. Our knowledge of *individuals* as well as of things and truths will no longer be defective, in consequence of an imperfect medium of perception. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Do not these words imply a perfection of means and facilities for the attainment of all that knowledge which tends to the promotion of holy happiness—the knowledge not only of God, but of his glorified creatures?

The glimpses of the society of the blessed afforded by Scripture tend to the same conclusion: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "And

these shall go away into life eternal." "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Paul anticipates in his converts his "joy and crown." "Every man" shall be "*presented* perfect in Christ Jesus," by him who "warned and taught him in all wisdom." In anticipation of Christ's appearance, the most touching appeal of Christian affection is, "By our gathering together unto him." Each of these passages supplies a beautiful social image; with each of them the notion of nonrecognition is at least very discordant, while that of recognition agrees with all. Why is the hope held out to us of joint recognition, joint abode, and mutual social delights, if we are to be alike "unknowing and unknown?" Recognition of some kind is implied in all these instances; and can it be a merely *collective* recognition? Where, then, would be the consoling force of the language?

Before these fixed lights of fact and truth, difficulties fade almost to nothing. The difficulty, for instance, arising from the difference of rewards amongst those who were the nearest friends when on earth—we cannot conceive it to have any other effect than frequent separation. It may possibly impede the constancy of their intercourse, but not by any means totally prevent it. . . . I am fully convinced, by long and large meditations upon it, that, notwithstanding its transcendent superiority and happiness, the society of heaven will, in its social arrangements and conduct, bear a much nearer resemblance to that of the present world than is generally imagined. Suppose that of two friends who are now most closely united, and wishing to be so for ever, one shall be greatly raised above the other in the future kingdom; this cannot touch in the least the ardour of their friendship. The inferior person will feel a just and pleasurable exultation in the dignity of his friend, and of course be always ready to meet him with joy; while, on the other side, celestial dignity will delight to condescend, and impart his lustre and felicity to the object of his ancient regard. True piety will always be the same. The best Christians, whatever be their station or their mental accomplishments, are the most simple, benignant, and condescending, simply because they are the best, because they have most of the temper of their Saviour.

Though no doubt heaven will be a state of activity in endless forms of service and achievement, there will also be a large portion of repose:

"There remaineth a rest to the people of God." Whatever will be the employments of the state, the long leisure of immortality will afford ample time for the indulgence of friendship wherever the affections may lead.

And may we not be permitted to suppose that the benignant Saviour, who has felt the affections and preferences of friendship on earth, and who will probably retain them for ever, and who will preside over the arrangements of eternity—may we not suppose that he will show peculiar indulgence to this most felicitous affection, and so dispose of friends through his celestial empire as to allow them free and delightful intercourse for ever? I have no doubt that he will do this.

Thus, you perceive, there is solid and ample ground for cherishing this most soothing anticipation. But to what extent may this anticipation be indulged? Will our intercourse be continued with all pious friends, or only with some of them? I believe the answer of the heart to this question will be the true answer. Where you wish to be continued, there it will be. The friendship of heaven will, from the very nature of friendship, be a matter of choice, or rather, an adherence to our present choice.

The affectionate veneration for wise and excellent parents, and the love of their society which nature inspires and piety confirms, will continue for ever. The relation betwixt them and us can never be dissolved, never forgotten. And as the relation itself is immortal, the tender instincts and attachments resulting from it will also be immortal. Your parents will be as much your parents a hundred millions of long ages hence, in fact and in feeling, as they are at this hour. Their care and love in training us to wisdom and piety, when the supreme value of these results shall be fully perceived, will indefinitely enlarge the sum of our obligations, and render them more precious and venerable for ever. Then, children in their turn become parents. This gives rise to a new affection, which also, from the nature of the case, must continue through eternity. This opens a beautiful view of the richness and variety of celestial love—love for glorified parents, love for glorified children—in all who are thus blest on both sides of their being.

Whether the tenderness of personal attachment shall be continued in the world to come, when the constitution of our nature shall be changed, seems at first sight the most difficult point to determine in the whole inquiry. The difficulty arises from its being a *mixed* affection. The inferior ingredients of the tender affections, and the alliances to which they lead, having answered their purpose, will be finally extinguished in death; but it appears to me certain that the mental affinity, the tenderness of

spirit, the intercourse of soul with soul, which are more or less experienced in all happy cases of this sort, will remain as some of the finest elements of the life, and will form a high and everlasting endearment betwixt those who were united in the days of time. Milton was as great a philosopher as a poet. His views of human nature and the social affections were the most exalted that ever were formed. To any one who delights to study the social constitution of our race, what eloquent wisdom there is in the following lines:—

“Hail, wedded love * * *
 * * * by thee,
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of father, son, and brother, first were known.”

And can it be supposed that an affection which produces a measureless flow of good on earth will lose all its charms with the extinction of life, and do nothing to augment the happiness of eternity? It is commanded to those who bear this relation, at least on one side, to love each other “as Christ has loved his church.” The love of the Saviour is an immortal love; and this seems to convey an intimation that the other will also be immortal.

How infinitely solemn are these friendships of personal tenderness! They are frequently so slight and inscrutable in their commencement that no human thought is fine enough to trace them to their origin. The original fountain lies remote and concealed, among the shades and mysteries of our wonderful nature; no intellectual Bruce has ever penetrated to their source. But, like the Nile, they flow on and bless, and sometimes desolate. They may flow to bless or desolate for ever.

Do you put this final question of the whole subject,—“Who, among all the friends I have ever possessed, will have most of my regard through eternity?” The answer is certain. It will be the person who has done you most *religious* good, who has most drawn down the Divine benedictions upon you by his prayers, and who has added most to the riches of your being whoever that may prove to be. Yes, this is certain, all persons and things will then be estimated by this reference to the sovereign Lord of our immortality. Let us adopt this standard of estimate *now*!

THE OBJECT OF FAITH.*

THERE are two ways in which Christianity may be exhibited in its practical aspects. It might be shown that the moral law is not only acknowledged by the gospel, but is enshrined, as a very part of it, in its bosom; that the same ten commandments which were issued on Sinai have been republished from Calvary; and that in this new proclamation of the decalogue, its moralities are enforced not only by all the original sanctions, but also by others which make it still more binding on those who profess the name of Christ, to keep his, which are also God's commandments. So that instead of the Gospel making void the law, it does rather establish the law; and the true Christian, so far from being an anti-nomian, is of all men the strictest legalist, if by a legalist is meant one who is scrupulous to maintain the authority of the Divine law, and in his own conduct to observe all precepts. Or it might be shown that the Christian graces, including faith itself, are in fact so many Christian moralities; not mere sentiments confined within the breast, but operative principles which exhibit the practical piety of a holy life. For while having to do with the doctrines of the Gospel, they have also, and fully as much, to do with its duties.

Being wishful to exhibit a moral as well as the doctrinal aspects of the Gospel, I have chosen the latter of the two methods: since thus I hope to succeed in showing that not only is there a connection between doctrine and duty, but that so close is this connection that the right apprehension of the doctrine includes in it the admission of the duty, and the receiving of the doctrine involves in it the doing of the duty.

Faith the first-mentioned, and in many respects the most important, of the Christian graces, will occupy us in this discourse.

What then is faith?

"Faith," says Paul, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) It has to do with the future and the invisible. Prophetic in its vision, it is not things present, but things "hoped for," or still future, that it beholds; so beholds them, however, that they do not flit on a distant horizon as dim images, or melting shadows, or airy outlines, but are fixed and firm as substantial realities. Spiritual in its vision, it is not sensible objects, but God, and

* The Christian Graces, by the Rev. W. Trail, A.M. Collins: Glasgow.

truth, and heavenly things, that faith beholds; so beholds them, however, that, though "not seen," they are to it evident—clear, certain, manifest.

Apply now the Apostle's generic definition of faith specifically to that with which it has most to do—Salvation and the Saviour. Here are "things not seen;" for salvation is not palpable to the eye, you cannot set it forth in visible shape or form so as that I can see it. And the Saviour, though visible, is not so to us, the heavens having received him out of our sight. And here also are "things hoped for;" we expect the coming of the Saviour, and at his coming we look for the completion of our salvation in the redemption of our bodies from the grave, even as our souls have already been redeemed from death. "Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 23—25.)

But how is it that faith can give substance or reality to things which, away in a distant futurity, might be supposed to have only the undefined shadowiness of the images of hope? or how give evidence, or vivid apparentness, to things which, away in the altitudes of the upper world, might be supposed to be but dimly guessed at? Say that is a firm and unflinching belief in trustworthy testimony concerning these things "hoped for" and "not seen"—even the testimony of a credible witness, to whom they are already present and visible: say also that it is, so to speak, a new sense, or a new power of spiritual perception, imparted to the soul when born again of the Spirit, by which it can, as it were, pierce through distance in time or space: say that faith is this, and then it is easy to see how to "things hoped for" it gives substantiality, and how of "things not seen" it is the evidence.

The question then, What is faith? will perhaps best be answered by our considering first its object, and then its actings.

First then, of the object of faith; or that which is presented to the mind, in order, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, to call forth this grace into existence.

I. And here I observe that the object first presented to faith is the testimony of God the Father concerning his Son Jesus Christ.

That testimony is to be found in the Scriptures, and in substance it is this:—that God foreseeing man would fall, a covenant of redemption was

entered into between the Father and the Son, by which to restore a portion of our race; that in pursuance of this covenant the Father sanctified and sent his Son, Jesus Christ, into this our world to be the propitiation for our sins; that on the cross Christ offered up himself a true sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice; that this sacrifice, having fully met all the claims of the Divine law, was accepted by the Father; that, on the ground of this sacrifice then offered up and accepted, God is ready to receive back to pardon and to favour any and every sinner who cometh to him through Christ; and that the salvation, which Christ by his obedience and his death thus procured for sinners, is a complete and perfect salvation, being all that God's honour demanded, and all that the necessities of the sinner's case require.

Such is the testimony of God the Father concerning his Son as our Saviour. And this first is the object of our faith. For until I receive this testimony, not merely believing in it, but feeling persuaded of it, and heartily assenting to it, as the very truth of him who cannot lie, I have not faith. For what are those doing who receive not the Father's testimony concerning Christ, but giving the lie to God direct? They are doing to him, what, if done to a fellow mortal, would be resented as the foulest affront. "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." And what have ye got to say, unbelieving sinners, in palliation of wickedness so enormous as this? Can you affect ignorance? or may you, with the Bible before you, try to hide this your sin by feigning surprise?—Yea, has God said so? No; well do you know that he has said it, and yet ye believe him not.

But why must I have a *Divine* testimony here as the basis of my faith? Simply because here is a matter on which God alone is either entitled or qualified to be the witness.

(1.) First, God alone is entitled to be the witness here. I am his creature, the subject of his government, and amenable to his laws. If then I am apostate, it is from him I have apostatised; if I have sinned, against him my sin has been committed; if I am under condemnation, forth from him has the sentence gone: whether I can be restored, it is then for him to say; whether I can be pardoned, it is for him to declare. And if my restoration and pardon are possible, it is for him to pronounce by what means and on what conditions.

(2.) Then, secondly, God alone is qualified to be the witness here. For events which run back into eternity are involved in the question of my

salvation. And what can human testimony, or the voice of history, reveal to me concerning those eternal transactions which were necessary to my redemption, but transpired before the creation of the world? And events which no human eye could see are involved here. For what does history, with its human witnesses, tell me of the scene which was enacted on Calvary? It tells me what it saw, that a man—the man Christ Jesus—was led out to be crucified; that he was nailed to a cross; that he died on that cross; that his heart was pierced with a spear upon that cross; that his dead body was taken down from that cross and buried. This much history tells me, because this much it saw. But what is this to my salvation? Had I any interest in the death of Christ? Can his blood, then and there be shed, avail to wash away my sins? It is not history which can tell me this: but One who saw deeper than human eye could look into this mystery. The Divine Father alone can assure me of what he alone could know—that his death on Calvary, by which malice only sought to sate its thirst for blood, was an expiatory sacrifice for sin—that this victim, whom ruthless rage had seized upon, endured pangs which his enemies could not have caused, and received wounds in his soul which they could never have inflicted—that besides yonder cross which man could see, there was a bloody altar which man could not see; and besides the nails which cruel hands had driven through that quivering flesh, there was also bathed in that bleeding heart the invisible sword of Divine justice. And questions which no human computation can decide are involved here. Did this sacrifice of Christ rise to the vast demands of a broken law? and did it take the full gauge of the depths of sin and misery into which I had sank? But who can assure me of this, except God himself; for who but he could really know what his honour and glory required, or what would be sufficient to restore the creatures who had fallen from the state of innocence in which he had made them?

The testimony concerning Christ, therefore, on which it is safe to rest, is not a human but a Divine testimony. It is not what history records, but what God the Father reveals concerning Jesus, that faith is to believe. It is not the witness of men, but the witness of God which is greater, that faith can rely upon here. His voice, who knoweth the Son, who knoweth the requirements of his own law, and who knoweth also the wants of us his sinful children—his voice, and no other, can faith listen to. It must hear what God the Lord will speak, or what he hath already spoken. If he has said it—that Christ died for sinners, and that whoso-

ever believeth in Christ shall be saved; then is faith satisfied, for here is a true witness who cannot lie—a competent witness who could not be deceived.

Ah! then, Lord, give me to hear thy testimony concerning thy Son. Thou hast said of *him* that there is salvation through his blood; thou hast also said of *thyself* that thou art ready to receive whosoever cometh unto thee through him. Give me then to hear, and not only to hear, but also to believe this thy testimony—to be persuaded of its truth as thine—heartily to assent unto it, and confidently to rest in it: for until I do this, I cannot, as thou knowest, have any saving faith.

YOUR BEST FRIEND.

BEWARE that your best friend does not become a *lost friend*. Your present course of guilt is tending to alienate him for ever from you. His patience has been amazing, but you are rapidly exhausting it. It should startle you to think that you know not the boundary of his forbearance, and know not, of course, how near that limit you may this moment be. A few more repulses of infinite love, perhaps but one, may settle this great question, causing his mercy to be clean gone for ever.

Our anguish at the loss of a friend is in proportion to the clearness of our views of the value of his friendship. Look then, at the value of Christ's friendship in the light of his infinite attributes, and the blessings he is able to bestow. The loss is great to be an alien and a stranger to such a friend, in the present life. What brightness his friendship can throw over the dark scenes of adversity! What cheerless midnight in that bosom that enjoys none of the beams of the Sun of Righteousness! How gloomy, without him, the valley of the shadow of death!

And what an opportunity *eternity* will furnish, for estimating the loss of such a friend! There will be no dimness of the mental eye. No worldly cares or pleasures will prevent intensity of thought upon that dreadful theme. With what terrible vividness will all the expressions of the lost friend's kindness recur to the mind! His power and willingness to save, his tender sympathy, his humiliation, and his sufferings, his patience, his invitations, and his promises; what topics of thought, as life's unfolded map receives the terrific brightness of the beams of truth as they shine in eternity! Beware that you do not encounter in eternity the dreadful fact, that your friend is a *lost friend*.

CHARMING DOMESTIC PICTURE.

WHILE the cheerful, light-hearted mother went about like a bird in the otherwise silent and somewhat gloomy house of her husband—for he was a man of very different temper—like a bird with a song of gladness, inspiring happier thoughts than it knows how to express, she seems to have had the habit of indulging in those wild vagaries of imagination which form so striking a feature in the higher and more systematic productions of her son. In her own charming way she describes her mode of entertaining her children, and we see at once how an ardent nature like that of Goethe must have listened and drank in the music of her words. Her faculty of story-telling was equally delightful to mother and child. “Air, fire, and water,” she says, “I have represented under the forms of princesses, and to all natural phenomena I gave a meaning which I almost believed more fervently than my little hearers. As we thought of paths that led from star to star, and thought of the great spirits we should meet there, I was as eager for the hours of story-telling as the children themselves. I was quite curious about the future course of my own improvisation, and any invitation which interrupted these evenings was disagreeable. There I sat, and there Wolfgang held me with his large black eyes; and when the fate of one of his favourites was not according to his fancy, I saw the angry veins swell in his temples, I saw him repress his tears. And when I made a pause for the night, promising to continue it on the morrow, I was certain that he would in the meanwhile think it out for himself, and so he often stimulated my imagination. When I turned the story, according to his plan, and told him that he had found out the *dénouement*—then was he all fire and flame, and one could see his little heart beating underneath his dress. His grandmother, who made a great pet of him, was the confidante of all his ideas as to how the story would turn out, and as she repeated these to me, and I turned the story according to these hints, there was a little diplomatic secrecy between us which I never disclosed. I had the pleasure of continuing my story to the delight and astonishment of my hearers, and Wolfgang saw with glowing eyes the fulfilment of his own conceptions, and listened with enthusiastic applause.—*Mrs Ellis's Mothers of Great Men.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE LEPERS INGRATITUDE.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 5, 1859,

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"—Luke xiv. 17.

THESE words will be fresh in your remembrance as part of our lesson for the day; I may, therefore, advert only in brief to the circumstances out of which they arose. Our Lord having preached sometime at Capernaum had occasion to pass through the midst of Samaria, on his way to Jerusalem. On arriving at the entrance of one of the Samaritan villages there met him ten men, all afflicted with one of those dreadful disorders, which by the rules of the Mosaic law precluded the sufferers from all intercourse with the rest of society. On this account, therefore, ashamed and afraid to approach very near to the Saviour, but standing afar off, they all raised their voices together, and exclaimed, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Our Lord, without intimating any intention, either to grant or deny their suit, simply bids them go and show themselves to the priests; a direction which they would have understood well enough, if they had been cured, since a testimonial from the priest was required before entering again upon their usual employment. Impelled, however, as it would seem, by a confidence in the kind purposes of the Saviour, or by some irresistible conviction of his being more than man, they went their way, probably expecting that in some way or other they were to be cured by the priest. Their surprise and joy, however, may be well conceived on finding that they had scarcely set out, to comply with our Lord's command, when their obedience was rewarded by an instant cure. "And it came to pass, that as they went, they were cleansed." Thus far the afflicted men had kept all together, but now one of their company parts from the rest. Like them, indeed, he is anxious to get his testimonial from the priest, as to the

certainly of his cure; but, unlike them, he thinks he ought first to go back and return thanks to his benefactor. Accordingly, while the others go on their way, he turns back to Jesus, and falling down on his face, at the feet of the Saviour, acknowledges with a full heart and loud voice the blessing which had been conferred upon him. Our Lord did not forget that there were others upon whom he had conferred this blessing too, some of whose religious light and privileges had been greater than those of this poor Samaritan; and, therefore, the Saviour appeals to the surrounding multitude in language which sufficiently marks his sense of the ingratitude—"Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, 'save this stranger.'" Then turning to the grateful Samaritan, he exclaimed—"Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole."

Such is, in substance, the history of a fact which occurred to our blessed Lord in the course of his travels. But, as most of these incidents of the Saviour's life are susceptible of being, if not designed to be read with a view to some spiritual application, we may not unfitly go over the ground again, and learn some practical lessons for ourselves.

Observe, first, then, the condition of the men who were the subjects of this miraculous cure. They were lepers, that is, persons suffering under a disease which rendered them wretched to look upon, and loathsome to approach. The disease was, in fact, an awful type of spiritual death, selected of God himself to be such for its hopeless incurableness, for its ghastly hideousness, for the manner in which member by member, and function by function wasted away, leaving the sufferer half dead and half alive. In the time of the Crusades, persons afflicted with this malady were accustomed to wear a shroud, indicating that they were looked upon by those around them as persons already dead. The malady was not, as has been commonly supposed, contagious. This, indeed, it could not have been, as we find that Naaman still retained the conduct of armies, and Gehazi was admitted to converse with the king of Israel. No; that which made the leper such an object of aversion to the Jews was an opinion prevalent among them that this disease more than any other was a special mark of the Divine displeasure visited upon the sufferer for some heinous and undiscovered sin. Accordingly, in the 13th chapter of Leviticus we find this direction for the treatment of these unhappy men. "And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering on his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be." I have said this disease was a type. What, brethren, if God should give commandment to deal thus with those who have the leprosy of sin? If he gave commandment to deal thus with those who were hideous to men on account of the leprosy of the body, how think you he will deal with those who are hideous to himself, on account of their leprosy of soul? Think you there is not some meaning of deep and awful significance in the fact, that so long as the leprosy continued, the leper was to be excluded from the temple of God, to be banished from the society of his fellow men, was compelled to take up his abode without the camp, and even as he walked along the public thoroughfare was to become the degraded herald of his own shame, and compelled to cry as he walked along the street, "Unclean, unclean." Yes, and we cannot be at any loss to see what the lesson is. There is a deep leprosy of

sin which taints the soul of all mankind, and as long as the plague of this leprosy remains uncleansed, unbewailed, and uncared for, the wrath of God abides upon us. True, under a spiritual economy, we are not, while in this state, prohibited by God from worshipping in his earthly courts; we are not debarred from intercourse with our fellow-men; we are not required as these poor lepers were, to stand at the corners of the streets, exhibiting our dark leprosy to the gaze of men, wearing the badge of disease on our upper lip, to warn all who abhor the sight of our spiritual maladies to pass by on the other side. No, for what would become of us if we were? What, if every man, not renewed in the spirit of his mind, should be compelled to wear a covering on his upper lip, to indicate that he was still lying under the wrath of God—what, I say, if we should suddenly see this ancient law of the leper applied to the different kinds of spiritual diseases with which we know men to be afflicted, and as we walked along our streets were to hear a man, for example, known to be rich, supposed to rank high in the estimation of his fellow-men, and who appeared to be enjoying the fruit of his own industry and diligence, exclaiming, ‘Stand by, I am not what I seem: the riches you see me with are the fruit of extortion, or the price of unrighteous gain, or the result of unprincipled and unscrupulous scheming, or unfulfilled duty to God and the poor; stand by, look at the mark on my upper lip, I am unclean, unclean?’ What, if we should see the young man, said to be respectable, known to be kind, supposed to be moral, or at least as moral as most of those around him, compelled to drag his deeds of darkness before the front and forehead of day, no longer protected by the accursed conventions of society, obliged to proclaim his own sentence of exclusion from all virtuous fellowship, saying, ‘Stand by, look on my upper lip, I am unclean, unclean?’ And, what if we should see the hypocrite, one whose religion was as conspicuous as the Scribes phylactery, whose look and phrase speak more than common of the sanctuary, and whose irreverent repetition of the Lord’s name met us at every sentence, whose every look expressed, ‘Stand by, I am holier than thou;’ what, if we should see him, I say, marked with a brand which might be seen and read, indicating that all this outside Godliness was but a bait for men, a mark of dissimulation, a fragrant wreath hung round the whited sepulchre which within was unclean. But yet, my brethren, shrink as men may from such an exposure as this now, must it not come to this at last? Will there be any of these spiritual lepers in heaven? Can they there, as they can here, join themselves to the true worshippers of God, and blend their unsanctified hallelujahs with the pure minstrelsy of the world above? No; the light of judgment will bring out their defiled heart; all concealment will be at an end; the leper unwashed, unpardoned, unsanctified by the blood of sprinkling, shall proclaim before an assembled universe the fact of his own uncleanness, and abide the unalterable sentence—“Without the camp of Christ shall thy eternal habitation be.”

But I pass on from the condition of these unhappy sufferers to consider their behaviour under their affliction. It seems expressly noted in the Scripture, that they came forth to meet Christ as he entered into the village, as if afraid they might miss him; at all events, eager to be among the earliest partakers of his healing power. Brethren, men’s anxiety about a cure is generally proportioned to their sense of sin and danger. If they feel these but slightly, they may wait till the remedy comes to them; if they feel these

acutely, they will be glad enough to go to the remedy. Which of these, then, represents our conduct best. We are all born with the stain of leprosy upon us. What steps have we taken for its removal? Are we seeking the physician, or are we waiting for the physician to seek us? striving diligently to be delivered from the body of this death, or content to have it hanging to us to the end of our days? These are important questions, because they virtually decide whether we feel our leprosy. It is a melancholy fact—and it is to be feared every congregation has some who can verify that there are multitudes of so called Christians whose religion never costs them one serious thought or anything worth the name of effort. Blind to any perception of their spiritual leprosy, utterly indifferent whether it be cured or whether it spread, they leave the soul to take care of itself. If the physician should come and force a remedy upon them mechanically, independently, and without any endeavour of their own, all would be well—but even when stirred up by his grace to fetch a cure from afar, to make sacrifice of present ease to secure it—to be obliged to forego some worldly association or worldly habit to be made whole, this is more than they are prepared for, and rather than incur so great a cost, they will continue as they are, and go down to the grave with the leper's final mark upon their souls.

These lepers, however, as we have seen, were not indifferent; they were both eager for the cure and importunate to obtain it—not leaving one of their number to sue for it, but all lifting up their voices together, saying—"Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us."

We come, therefore, to see how their suit is entertained. What answer does the Saviour of mankind vouchsafe to this earnest prayer? Is it a promise of instant deliverance? No; God will first try the faith of his people, will first prove their willingness to comply with the plain commandment, and may even delay his answer so long as to induce in them a momentary fear that God's ear is heavy, and cannot hear, or his arm shortened that he cannot save. But these fears are groundless. If it had not been our Father's good pleasure to grant us our request, he had not given us the heart to make it. All answers to your prayers, if interpreted by immediately succeeding circumstances, may often appear very unpromising—they are neither what you expected, nor what you wished. You thought, like some who consulted the Saviour while on earth, that in answer to your prayers your should have instant relief—that, with Mary and Martha, Christ would come to your brother without loss of time; that with the afflicted demoniac, he would command the evil spirit to go out forthwith, with the Apostle Paul, that the grieving thorn would be taken away at once; and instead of this, the only answer you get from the sympathising and all-compassionate Saviour is, "Go thy way, trust, expect, wait God's time; and, at all events, go in God's way." Brethren, I know such answers as these must exercise greatly the faith of a Christian. You have some source of disquietude in your family, perhaps, which sorely tries your spirituality; or you have some strong temptation which meets you in the path of necessary duties; and you think within yourselves, "How much better could I serve God if this impediment were removed." But still, your prayers are not answered; at least, you suppose they are not; the only answer, if answer it is to be called, is one which, to all appearance, at least, can do neither good nor harm, neither hasten your deliverance nor retard it—"Go, show thyself to the priest." And will you not go? Are the means prescribed

so very difficult to practise? If the Lord had bid you do some great thing, if he had told you of some grievous chastenings to come upon you, which were to yield their peaceable fruits of righteousness afterwards, you would have borne those chastenings submissively—how much rather should you bow to his righteous government, when he only says to you, “Go thy way, and wait.” Brethren, do not forget that God tries our faith in little things as well as in great things—in the calm endurance of our daily cross as much as in the triumphant seizure of the martyr’s crown. Therefore, however slack the Lord may sometimes appear concerning his promises; or however hopeless and discouraging may appear the prescribed methods for their fulfilment, all we have to do is to obey. We are not to say within ourselves, ‘What good will waiting do? What good will closet retirement do? What good will wrestling with God in prayer do? What good will attending upon him in ordinances do?’ We must follow simply the Divine direction, whether we can see the reason for it or not—“Go, show thyself to the priest.” Of course, various reasons might be assigned for our Divine Lord giving this particular direction to the lepers, such as the desire to put honour on the ancient law, as well as to inculcate gradually a reverent regard for ordinances. But the chief motive of the direction, we cannot doubt, was, to afford a strong trial of the lepers’ faith; to see whether, without the slightest intimation of Christ’s willingness to cure them, or the remotest hope that they ever should be cured, they would, on the faith of his word alone, take a step, which for all purposes of their recovery, seem wholly inadequate and useless. And, up to this point, at all events, the faith of all them endured the trial, for they went to the priest—“It came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.” Brethren, let us learn hence, whenever a Divine command is given to us, never to object to the seeming inadequacy, or unlikelihood of compliance, to effect the desired result. You cannot have failed to note how often God gives the greatest blessings with the meanest instrumentality: seven times dipping in the Jordan, clay made with spittle, water from the pool of Siloam, are all to be considered, not as what they are in themselves, but as what God may choose to make them. There are Christian Naaman’s who think very slightly of the ordinance of baptism; and there are Christian disciples who refuse to break bread with Christ at his table, and, for such soul-destroying neglect, the common apology is, the impossibility of supposing that salvation could depend upon such things as these at all. But, surely, a much honester way of putting the question would be—‘Does salvation depend upon our obedience at all; upon our compliance with our Lord’s commands at all? With regard to the example before us, the answer is manifest—by obeying our Lord’s command, these men were cured. If they had reasoned, as some people in our day reason—‘What charm can there be in sayings, what good can we get by showing ourselves to the priest?’—they had continued lepers to their lives’ end.

And now we come to that part of the sacred narrative on which hangs the great moral question, for which chiefly, we may suppose, the record of it has been preserved. Though the whole ten had reverently owned the Almighty power of the Redeemer; though they had all manifested a lively faith; though they had all received the blessing for which their souls thirsted, one only was thankful, one only came back to glorify God, one only fell down to worship the giver, without caring to qualify himself to enjoy the gift. And could the Saviour overlook such heartless and ungrateful conduct? No; forgetful as

we may be of God's mercies, brethren, they are all carefully registered on high. Our deliverance from danger, our escapes from calamity, our consolation on the bed of languishing, and our rising from the bed of death are all writ down in the book of remembrance, which is penned by the finger of the burning seraphim, in order that it may be our faithful witness before the Judge of quick and dead. God is not niggard of his blessings; but he keeps strict account of those to whom he gives them. "Were there not ten cleansed?" said the Saviour, "where are the nine?" Brethren, let me press this thought upon you with much earnestness. When Hezekiah was raised from the bed of sickness, it is related of him, that he "rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him." No costly offering was laid on the altar of his God; no solemn recognition was made of the vows which he had made in his trouble; health had charmed to rest the resolves of pain, and only with fresh ingratitude, and more deep forgetfulness of God did he requite the great physician's debt. Do I, then, speak to any raised from sickness, delivered from danger; or even now, perhaps, receiving back to life and hope, those who were at the point of death? in what frame of spirit has this new blessing left you; to what altar have you bound your grateful offerings? with the nine have you rushed back to the world and in thoughtlessness run on again the same ungrateful and heedless course; or with the one have you come back to glorify God, to fall at the feet of Jesus, and to recount to all around you the story of your soul's deliverance; resolved, that henceforth, your work shall be a labour of love and gratitude, and your life shall be given to the Redeemer's praise?

In the application of this latter feature of the incident in the narrative, and in the answer which our Lord gave to the grateful leper, there must be allowed to be some difficulty. But it is a difficulty, which, understand it as we may, reads a solemn lesson to those who defer thanks, and forget mercies. The difficulty we allude to is that of fixing with accuracy what the one cured man had gained, as distinguished from what the other nine had lost. The gain of the one is settled easily. His cure was confirmed; his blessing was pronounced; his soul was converted and cheered by the sunshine of his Redeemer's pardon; he went his way rejoicing. But the loss of the nine is not so obvious. We see nothing in the history to warrant the conclusion that they were thrown back into their leprosy; and yet, there is nothing to justify us in supposing that they were cured of anything besides their leprosy—nothing to make us hope, that, with all their faith in the beginning, they were made spiritually whole in the end. No, all is obscure, all is doubt; all is wrapt in painful and distressing mystery; we see them, after a great blessing received, eager to rush back to the world. We never find them crossing the Saviour's path again; and the only answer we can get to all our speculations about their spiritual future, is to be deduced from that solemn, much-meaning question of the holy Saviour—"Where are the nine?"

What, then, brethren, is the conclusion from the whole subject? Why, that the man who contents himself with one act of dedication to God's service, however sincere, and there stops; one who is content with a few proofs of obedience and faith, however genuine, with a few tears of godly sorrow, however penitent—content with such things, I say, and there stops; such a one will neither have the approval of his Saviour while he lives, nor the comfort of his religion when he comes to die. That every Christian con-

gregation contains such, we may well fear. Many whose present religion is but the shadow of their first religion; whose love has waxed cold, whose thankfulness has died away; whose eyes have grown strange to tears, and their hearts to godly sorrow; who are barely keeping alive the embers of their spiritual sacrifice, living on the credit of their first convictions, only distressing themselves with appearances which will overcloud them at last.

Time will not allow me to enlarge on the signs of this spiritual declension, too often, it is to be feared, the forerunner of a final falling away from God. Of such perilous condition of soul, however, I could not point out a surer sign than ingratitude. Every day we live gives back to activity and life some who had been walking on the confines of the eternal world, who had well nigh closed their account with this present scene; and here and there we behold one resolving to perform his vows, coming back to glorify God, and determined henceforth to live no more unto himself, but unto him that died and rose again. But why are these instances of a holy dedication to God's service after a recovery from sickness so few? "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"

Again, sometimes we witness the spectacle of a highly privileged Christian family. In the life of the parents is seen a holy and consistent exhibition of Christian character; the incense of prayer and praise burns brightly and purely on the family altar, and every arrangement of the household seems designed to remind us that God is there. We look for the fruits of this. The parents are gone to rest; they are safe and happy, and at home with God; and of the children, perhaps, there are one or two that follow their steps, viewing religion as their chief concern, making the glory of God the aim of all they say or do, and the promises of God more than their necessary food. But why are the rest of the children living, as it were, on their parents reputation, content with reaching a certain point in the Christian race, and that point not a safe one—one which leaves them to be saved only by fire, only rescued as brands from the burning—ten indeed were cleansed; "but where are the nine?"

Again, we look upon an assembly of Christian worshippers. They listen with interested and sustained attention; the breath from heaven seems to inspire their worship; and wings from heaven seem to carry the message home: here and there is a heart touched, a reed bruised, a torpid conscience quickened into sensibility and life, but the others remain as before, dead to all spiritual animation, immortal statues, souls on canvass, having a name to live but are dead. Whence this difference? They confessed to the same leprosy, they cried for the same mercy, they met with the same Saviour, and were directed to the same care, and yet how few returned to their benefactor. One, two, or three in a congregation may come and fall at the feet of Jesus, but there were thousands to be cleansed, where are the ninety times nine?

But take a more particular illustration. Once a month, at least, in every

church, passing before our eyes, we look upon a goodly company of worshippers; they have been bowing with reverence before the footstool of the Redeemer; they have been singing their loud anthems to the praise of the great Mediator; they have been listening to the word of life with all the earnestness of men who were ignorant, seeking knowledge; guilty, desiring pardon; hungry, wanting food; dying, imploring life; but, mark you, when the invitations of the dying Saviour are recited in their ears, when the commemorative sacrifice of Christian faith and hope is offered to them, when mercy in tenderest accents proclaims to every penitent worshipper—"Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" then many who seemed to be in earnest, are in earnest no longer; the memorials of the Saviour's death and passion are spread before them in vain, and all we can do is to look with sorrow on the retiring throng and exclaim, "There were ten that seemed to be cleansed, but where are the nine?"

Sketches and Essays.

"HOW CAN I MAKE MY HEART LOVE CHRIST?"

"Papa," said Maria, after listening to a sermon, in which immediate faith and repentance were urged upon sinners, "it seems to me that if I only knew what I must do, and how to do it, I would. But, papa, when you talk about *going to Christ*, how can I tell what it means, because it is not literally going to him?"

"When we use this expression, my dear, we mean the same act, as when we say, *loving Christ*, or *believing in him*, or *trusting him*; they all refer to the same thing. You know that it is the nature of affection to desire to be near its object; and aversion, on the contrary, prompts us to withdraw to a distance. So, if a person is cordially reconciled to one with whom he has been offended, his first step is to *go to the individual*. When we apply such an expression to the *heart*, we use it figuratively, of course. Have you not sometimes felt, when you were thinking of some person whom you loved, and who was away from you, as if your heart *went out* to that person, and then it seemed as if the distance between you was lessened, though it was not so in reality?"

"O yes, papa, I know what sort of a person you mean, very well. When you and mamma were gone away last summer, I used to think of you till it almost seemed as if you were here, and then my heart would almost jump out to meet you, and the tears would come into my eyes when I remembered how far you were away."

"On the other hand, when you think of a person whom you do not like, your heart draws back, as it were, and retires into itself. Now, just tell me in which of these ways it is affected when you think of Christ?"

Maria was silent.

"Does your heart ever *go out* to him in love and confidence?"

"I—I—no, papa; I never felt towards him as I do to you. But how can I make my heart love him?"

"*Make your heart love, Maria!*—you cannot."

"That is what I have said a hundred times, papa, and you always tell me that is no excuse."

"And I have told you, too, a hundred times, *why* it is no excuse; but I will tell you again. Suppose you had come to me, when I returned, and said, 'Papa, I am not glad to see you at all, and I do not love you, but I suppose I ought to, and I wish you would teach me how to make my heart love you; do you think I ought to be satisfied?'"

No, papa."

"Might I not say to you, 'If you love me, my daughter, you must do it voluntarily, and not of constraint; and if you do it not, that is your fault; but I want no constrained affection?'"

"Yes, papa."

"I think, too, I can explain to you what is meant by faith. Suppose you had been guilty of a crime for which you were tried, and of which, if you were convicted, the punishment would be death. While you are lying in prison, trembling, and fearing the result of the trial, there comes a man to you, and says, 'I will undertake to plead your cause and to save you from punishment, on one condition: you must give up all other means of defence; you must employ no other advocate; but confide implicitly in me; on this condition I will save you.' Now, if you believe this man, and without adopting any other means of defence, should feel perfectly secure as to the result of the trial, you would show that you had *faith* in his promise."

"But, papa, would it not be foolish to feel such confidence in a man that I knew nothing about? He might deceive me, and then it would be too late to adopt any other measure."

"It certainly would be so, in the case I have supposed. In order to make the similitude apply in all its circumstances, you must suppose that you had received the fullest possible proof of his power, skill, and benevolence; that he had already saved thousands who had confided in him, and that there was no other source from which help could possibly come. Would it not, then, be the height of folly to reject his offer?"

"Yes, papa."

"And has not Christ given you the fullest proofs of his ability and willingness to save you? Has he not saved all who have trusted in him? You cannot offer him a greater insult than to doubt either his power or his love."

The thought which was in Maria's heart at this remark was uttered

almost involuntarily, and before she was aware of it. "Why does he not save me then?" said she, in a petulant tone, though she felt ashamed and frightened the moment the words had escaped her. Her father paused, and looked at her solemnly, almost sternly, as he said, "Because you will not let him, Maria!"

Although Maria's plea of inability had been so fully answered by her father, she was far from relinquishing it. Indeed, since she had become convinced, in some measure, of the sinfulness of her heart, and of her dependence on God for every good thing, there was no excuse which she urged so frequently as this.

The verse which stands at the head of this chapter (Jeremiah xiii. 23) gave her great distress, for several days after reading it. In order to open a conversation with her father, she repeated the passage, and inquired what it meant.

"It is a strong mode of expressing the power of long-continued habit," replied the father. "You know something of this yourself in little things. Don't you recollect how much difficulty you found in breaking yourself off the foolish habit you had some years ago, of sucking your thumb?"

"Yes, papa, I remember it well enough. Though I was ashamed, and wanted to cure myself of it, I could not; and I don't believe I ever should, if you had not made me wear a glove."

"Well, my dear, if in such trifles habit is so hard to be overcome, just think how much greater the difficulty must be in the case of the sinner. He *never* had any inclination to good, but only to evil; and if he found this inclination too strong to be resisted at first, how shall he overcome it when the force of habit has made it still stronger? How shall one who has all his life been accustomed to regard God, his Son, and his law, with feelings of aversion, begin to love them? How shall one who has always worshipped and loved himself supremely, begin to worship and love his Creator? How shall one who has lived for years with a heart full of pride and selfishness, and envy, and revenge, become lowly and benevolent, gentle and patient, kind and forgiving?"

"How, indeed!" thought Maria, as she applied every word to herself. "I see there is no hope for me." Then hard thoughts of God and of his law began to rise in her mind. Why had he created her with such a heart, or why created her at all? Why did he require what her utmost efforts would not enable her to perform? She hardly dared again propose these objections to her father; but at length she ventured to say,

that if sinners were so unable to change their hearts, she could not see how they were to blame.

Her father sighed. "They are to blame; because their very inability, consisting simply in unwillingness, constitutes their guilt. They have all the powers necessary for doing their duty; there is nothing wanting but a disposition. And if the want of disposition constitutes an excuse, then there is not only no such thing as guilt in the universe, but the more a man sins the less guilty he is. Why will you offer to your Creator an excuse which you would blush to present to a fellow-creature, and which you know would not be received at any human tribunal?"

It was now Maria's turn to sigh.

"I know what you think, my dear," resumed her father; "you think that you are a poor unfortunate creature, who are to be punished for having a wicked heart, which you cannot help, and for not obeying a law which it is impossible you should obey. It seems to you that you have been doing everything you possibly could to obtain salvation, and as if it would be very unjust and cruel in God to leave you to perish, after all your prayers, and tears, and efforts. Is it not so?"

Maria hesitated.

"I do not mean that you have just these thoughts distinctly arranged, but you have such feelings."

"Yes, papa, it does seem to me that I am trying to do all I can to be saved."

"Well, my dear, all I can say to you is, that before you can *ever* be saved, you must feel that you have never done anything towards your salvation, but everything to prevent it; that it would be perfectly just in God to leave you to perish; and, in short, that God is all right, and you all wrong."

OH FOR MORE FEELING!

WHAT language is more common among awakened sinners than this—
"I cannot feel that I am a sinner; and yet I know that I have broken God's holy law. I acknowledge that I am justly condemned. I am deeply distressed at times with the thought that I must surely perish. But my great burden is that I cannot feel this. I have no deep sense of

my own sinfulness. My constant and agonising prayer has been for months, 'O Lord, break this unfeeling heart!'"

There are unhappy souls, we must admit, whom God has deserted, who do not and cannot feel their lost condition; and who are designated by the apostle as "past feeling." Do you, afflicted reader, class yourself among these? You know that you cannot. You are in distress; and what distresses you? That you are calm and unmoved in the midst of your sins? That the awful position of your soul is unnoticed by you? That you have no desire to return to God?

"No, this is not my condition," you instantly answer. "I do feel; yet it is not because I am a sinner, but because my heart is so hard and unfeeling."

Now, suppose you transfer this experience from your soul to your body, and see how unfounded are your troubles. You are afflicted with a deep seated malady; it is invisible, it gives no pain; and yet its effects are apparent in the wasting of your body. Suppose you were to argue thus,—“I know that there is a deadly disease preying upon my vitals, and I desire to be cured; but I feel no pain—I do not see the loathsome seat of evil. If I could only feel and see this, I would call for the physician.”

You do know that the disease is there, and you do know that you are a sinner. The Spirit and the law of God have been working this conviction, and your deceitful heart is only shrinking into this refuge of lies in order to delay its flight to the city of refuge (Heb. vi. 18).

The Word of God gives us no intimation as to the precise amount of feeling which we are to have before we approach Christ for healing. Bartimeus knew that he was blind. This was enough to lead him to the wayside, where Jesus was to pass. There is no evidence that he thought of searching into the nature or origin of his blindness. He knew that he was blind, and that was enough to force from him the cry, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" The Israelites, who were bitten by the fiery serpents, were not required to trace the effects of the subtle poison as it entered the circulation, or to mark the symptoms of its deadly progress, before they looked at the brazen serpent for healing. The moment they felt the venomous fang they might look and be healed. Since it was so with the types of the sinner and the cross, is it not equally so with the antitypes?

Where has God said, Produce so much conviction, feel so and so, in regard to your sin, humble your soul to that particular point of anguish

and grief, and *then* you may have Christ and his free grace? Nay ; on such a plan no inquiring soul could ever know his warrant to believe, because he could never ascertain whether his conviction, grief, and anguish were enough.

“ Let not conscience make you linger ;
Nor of fitness fondly dream :
All the fitness he requireth,
Is to feel *your* need of him.”

It was truly said by President Edwards, “ that those who are partly convinced of sin are not apt to think themselves greatly convinced ; and the reason is this : men judge of the degree of their own convictions of sin by two things jointly considered, namely, the degree of sense which they have of guilt and pollution, and the degree of cause they have for such a sense, in the degree of their real sinfulness. It is really no argument of any great conviction of sin for some men to think themselves to be very sinful, beyond most others in the world ; because they are so indeed very plainly and notoriously. And therefore a far less conviction of sin may incline such an one to think so than another ; he must be very blind indeed, not to be sensible of it. But he that is truly under great conviction of sin, naturally thinks this to be his case. It appears to him that the cause he has to be sensible of guilt and pollution is greater than others have, and therefore he ascribes his sensibility of this to the greatness of his sin, and not to the greatness of his sensibility.”

This difficulty as to a want of feeling arises wholly from a wrong view of what salvation is. We fail to see in it a perfect gratuity to sinners. To *sinners* I say ; for the whole effort of the soul, in all its struggles, is to make some preparation, to be in some peculiar state of mind, before it can receive the free gift. But Christ came to call not the righteous, but sinners : the invitations of the Gospel are to *SINNERS*. No one, indeed, will come to the physician, who has not a sense of want ; but there is no merit, nor any proper preparation, in such sense of want. It is only hungering and thirsting. If you hunger after salvation, come ; if you are athirst, come ; if you are heavy laden because you cannot feel your sins, *come*.

Let us, however, suppose this difficulty to be removed. You are satisfied that certain convictions of sin are not prescribed as necessary to your acceptance of Christ. Satan and your own deceitful heart have not

exhausted their subterfuges. You now are troubled because you feel no love nor joy; and the soul often complains that it has even no desire for salvation. It seems to be your determined purpose to obstruct the way by every possible impediment. Can you conceive of a drowning man refusing to seize the rope which is thrown to him, because he doubts whether he feels gratitude enough to the friend who has thrown it; or because he is not certain whether he rightly wishes to be saved? Surely Satan has blinded the minds of them that believe not, when he can thus prevent them from simply accepting eternal life.

There are two grand errors upon which all these difficulties of the inquiring soul rest. The first is, that there is some work, preparation, or experience demanded, previous to a surrender of the heart to Christ. The second is, that salvation is an emotion, or a feeling, or a series of these, instead of a new life begun in faith. All the thoughts, emotions, or acts of the soul, before it rests upon Christ, are utterly worthless in the sight of God. "Lord, I BELIEVE," is the first utterance of the new-born soul. Preceding exercises, if they have any value, only lead the soul to this confession, and then the feelings are the fruits of that new life derived at the cross.

You may have been weeks or months waiting for these feelings to come—wrestling with God in prayer that he would send them—and deeply disturbed because the prayer was not answered. Did you ever go to the Word of God, and put your finger upon the command that you must have this feeling, or that feeling, before you could believe on Christ? Did our Lord tell Nicodemus to go home and wait until his heart was broken, and then come again and receive life? No, he told him to *believe*. Did the apostles tell the thousands who were awakened by Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, to wait for further light or further conviction? No, the command was, *repent*. It was an act to be performed then; and among the three thousand who did receive Christ there, must there not have been an infinite variety of experience? Some felt as you feel—perhaps some delayed as you delay—but the three thousand, without waiting, received the proffered salvation. Did Paul advise the trembling jailor to wait until he was better prepared to come? No, but out of the very jaws of suicide to believe in that Saviour who received him. A young man came to the writer of these pages a few weeks ago under great concern, asking what he must do to be saved. He was directed to the Cross and its Divine Victim, and to a simple receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Way of life. A

few days after he came rejoicing in hope, saying, "I did not know how easy a thing conversion was. I thought there would be some great and wonderful change in my feelings before I came to the Cross." This is but the old story of Naaman, or rather of the human heart, refusing to receive a free salvation; looking at its own corruptions and its amendment, instead of the great object of faith which is so prominently set before us in the Word of God.

Let the reader look at the sum of these errors and disheartening delays. *You are unwilling to be saved by grace.* You do not confess it, but your posture proves it; you are waiting, waiting, waiting, months or even years, to be borne away into some griefs or raptures, which, it may be, God has no purpose of bestowing upon you. The effect is preposterously put before the cause, feeling before faith. If you could only feel hope, grief, terror, love, you would believe. God's declaration of mercy would then be true to you. Ah! sinner, it is true to you now, whether you feel it or not. Feeling becomes self-righteousness, if it takes the place of the righteousness of Christ. Would you feel now? Only believe. It is at the Cross (that is, believing) that the burden falls from the back, and the tears of genuine feeling from the eyes.—*Rev. W. Alexander, New York.*

LITTLE JANE.

LITTLE JANE had little in her own poor home to recommend religion to her; but the instructions she received at school, and the example of a pious uncle and aunt whom she visited, at the age of seven led her to call on the name of the Lord. Her heart clung more and more to her Saviour as her health declined. It is difficult to give an idea of the privations of this patient little sufferer. I have seen three or four hungry children quarrelling round her crib, over less than two potatoes each; and this also was her share of the mean and scanty provision. Suffering from personal neglect, and vexed with the conversation of the wicked, truly she had "need of patience." She often shed tears over the wickedness of those around her. On one occasion, where bad language had been used in the house, her heart was so full of heaviness, that she broke through the usual silence on this painful subject, and said, "Oh! it is so dreadful to be amongst the wicked; it does hurt me so!" She once respectfully said to her mother, "Mother, what a busy world this is! You

get us food, and work hard for us, but you never say a word about our souls and another world. Mother, you know the meaning of that text, 'He that knoweth his Lord's will, and doeth it *not*, shall be beaten with many stripes.'" For her brothers and sisters she was equally watchful. One night, a little sister got into bed and fell asleep, without having knelt down; but Jane was restless and unhappy. At length, after much hesitation, she quietly awoke her little sister, by asking her to look at the "pretty moon." Presently the little sleeper was aroused, and got out of bed, and was pleased with the sight; the faithful sister then affectionately said to her, "You did not say your prayers, Annie, before you got into bed." The child willingly knelt down—not an angry word passed—and Jane, relieved from the burden on her spirit, soon fell as fast asleep as her thoughtless little sister.

On being asked what she prayed for most, she replied, "to be cleansed from all sin: I feel my own sinful heart, but I believe God has given me a new heart on the top of it; still my old heart often rises up and troubles me." One day I found her much depressed. She said Satan seems to say, "You think you are going to heaven, but you will be deceived." At another time, "Satan has been trying me, that though I may think I shall get to heaven; yet at last, when I think I am getting in, God will shut the door against me; but I tell Satan, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,' and he can't answer that." Through Jesus Christ, she was "more than conqueror." I well remember her saying, "Christ is so much more precious to me than he used to be, because I feel so much more my need of him." She was in the habit of taking all her wants, in child-like confidence, to Jesus. I recollect her touching account of one of her Father's speedy answers to her petition. "I awoke, feeling unhappy, and I asked the Lord if he would be pleased to send me some one to comfort me. Miss W—— called, much earlier than I ever knew her come before. If Miss W—— had come a quarter of an hour sooner, she would have heard me praying for some one to be sent." This kind friend resided three miles off, and the hand of the Lord was no less manifest in leading her the first time, than in the present instance, to visit our little cottager. Two little boys were quarrelling over a basket they were carrying; this lady spoke to them, and kindly tried to reconcile them, but in vain. She then followed them to their home, to speak to their mother of their naughty behaviour, that she might correct them. These children were Jane's brothers. Thus did it please God to bring good out of evil. She re-

ferred to a time, in the beginning of her long illness, when she was foolishly afraid in the dark. "I was very foolish, when awake; I kept on whispering, 'Father, father,' 'Mother, mother'—not loud enough to wake them, only to find out whether they were awake. I need not have called *them*, when he was near who 'never slumbers nor sleeps.'" Now her sweetest hours were spent alone, and she was "quiet from fear of evil." Her peace increased as she neared the Jordan. On the morning of the day she died, she sent for her father, and begged him to read once more the hymn she usually read on Sabbath evenings, beginning—

"Lord and God of heavenly powers,"

At the words,

"We with them our voices raise,
Echoing their eternal praise."

She put up her finger, saying, "Hush! hark!" and in a moment she was absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

She had endured much in her fourteen short years on earth, but now she sees the Lord she loves and is more than satisfied.—*From "Short Memorials of Little Jane."*

THE LAMBS OF CHRIST'S FLOCK MADE A BLESSING.*

"I will make them a blessing."—Ezekiel xxxiv. 26.

I WANT to say a few more words to you to-day, dear children, about the lambs of the flock. One characteristic of sheep is that they like to flock together; and this is a mark of Christ's sheep too. They love one another's company, and they want all around them to belong to Christ's fold. They cannot be content to love Jesus themselves without longing that others should know and love him too. We have referred to some of the beautiful promises Christ makes about his sheep. One more is this—"I will *make them a blessing.*" Ezekiel xxxiv. 26. Can even the

* A little Work, just published, by Wertheim, Macintosh and Hunt, Paternoster Row.

lambs of Christ's flock be a blessing? Yes; sometimes God condescends to use even little ones to speak his praise, and to be a means of blessing to others.

A poor woman who was dying once said to the gentlemen who visited her,—“Thank God, Sir, my boy went to the Sunday-school. I can't read myself; but he can, and has read the Bible to me. I have learned from him that I am a sinner; I have heard from him of Jesus Christ; and I do, yes, I do put my trust in him. I am going to die, but I am not afraid; my dear child has been the means of saving my soul!”

The Lord Jesus Christ, when a child, was “occupied about his Father's business;” and, if we wish to be like Jesus, we shall not wait till we are older, but begin *now* to follow in his steps. There is no way in which children have so often been made useful to others as by setting a good example. A spirit filled with love to God and man has often helped to restrain what was evil, and to encourage what was right. And sometimes even a child may speak a “word in season.”

Frederic and Annette were sitting together at the door of their cottage-home in Switzerland one Sunday afternoon, talking about the sermon they had just heard at church, and which had been about keeping the Sabbath-day holy. They both tried to recollect as much as they could. “The minister said we ought to love Sunday more than any other day, and put away all our work, and think about Jesus, and try to help any one in trouble,” said Frederic thoughtfully. “Yes,” rejoined Annette; “but, do you know, I saw old Joseph making baskets to-day; and yet Sunday belongs to God.” The children were silent for a few minutes; then the little girl continued—“Supposing, Frederic, we were to go to old Joseph, and tell him that Sunday belongs to God.” They did not hesitate long, but set off together hand in hand to go to the poor blind man's. They found him sitting in his little garden, very busy making a basket. When they got near, Annette summoned up courage to say—“Joseph, do you know to-day is Sunday, and Sunday belongs to God? We ought not to make baskets to-day.” The blind man looked vexed, and said sharply, “Who are you, and what do you want?” “I am Frederic,” replied the little boy, “and this is Annette.” “And we are only come to tell you,” continued the latter, “that Sunday belongs to God; and that we ought to love Jesus, and love Sunday.” The poor man knit his brow, and turning from them impatiently, went on with his work all the harder. The children stood still before him with such an imploring look, it would almost have touched his heart could he have

seen them; but he only replied—"You have nothing to do with me children; go away home!" "I must just give you this first, Joseph," said Frederic, as he slipped a penny which his uncle had given him into the old man's hand, for he knew that he was very poor, and was sometimes even forced to beg. The blind man was taken by surprise, and said, in a milder voice,—“Well, tell me what it is you want.” “We wanted to give you this,” they replied together; “and to say that we ought not to work on Sunday.” “What could I do if I didn't?” said Joseph; “it would be no good to me going to church, for I am blind, and nearly deaf too.” Frederic took from his pocket the little Testament which had been given to him at the Sunday-school, and said,—“If you would not mind leaving off work for a few minutes, I will read to you what we heard to-day at church.” He sat down with his sister on the grass, by the old man's side, and read, in a clear, distinct voice, part of the 9th chapter of St. John, about the blind man whom our Saviour cured. It was something quite new to poor old Joseph. He listened with folded arms, and more than once expressed his astonishment. The children left him, saying, “Good bye, Joseph; please do not work any more on Sunday.”

After they were gone, the blind man felt as though he could not go on with his basket, but he sat still for a long time, deep in thought. The children's words, “Sunday belongs to God,” had touched his heart.

When the children came, the next Sunday, to see Joseph, they found him ill in bed. They sat down quietly; and, presently, Annette asked—“Should you like Frederic to read to you again?” “Yes,” replied the old man, with a deep sigh. The boy opened his Bible at the 5th chapter of St. John, and read the whole of it through. Joseph listened with fixed attention, and said, as he finished, “I should like to hear more about Jesus, but I have no one but you to read to me. Could you not come sometimes of an evening, and read to me a bit?” “Oh! yes,” exclaimed both the children, quite delighted, “we could come every evening after school!”

And so these little children were allowed to become the instructors of the poor old blind man: and each evening they came and read to him a chapter from the Bible, and talked to him about what they had learnt at school—about Jesus Christ, who died for sinners, and who is so willing to receive all who come unto him.

Joseph was ill for many long weeks, and during this time he was often

visited by the good pastor of the village; and it pleased God so to bless his own word, that, though his bodily eyes were still blinded, the darkness was taken away from his heart. He learnt first to know that he was a sinner, and then to look to Jesus as his Saviour. The sad, gloomy expression he used to have quite disappeared from his face, and, instead of it, a bright, happy smile rested on his countenance. After some time, it pleased God to restore his health in a great measure; and, one bright, Sunday morning in spring, poor old Joseph went for the first time to God's house, led by the two dear children who had first carried to him the message of mercy.

This is only one instance, out of many I might tell you of, in which children have been able to minister to others, and in which the promise has come true—"I will make them a blessing." Have you ever thought of this before? Ask yourselves, "Have I ever tried to do good to any one, or to help any one? Have I ever spoken to my companions about Jesus?" A missionary has sometimes seen little black children sitting on a stone outside the door of their house, reading the Bible to five or six old people who could not read for themselves. Is there no one to whom you could go and read the word of God?

One parting word. We have seen who Christ's lambs are, and how we may know them; how safe they are because he sought them out; what the mark is that he puts upon them; how tenderly he feeds them; and how they love to listen to his voice, and follow his bidding. And a day is soon coming when the "Chief Shepherd" shall appear in his glory, and when all the people of this earth will be gathered together before him, and divided into two great companies. All the sheep and lambs will be placed on his right hand, and the goats on the left. Every child who is now reading this will be there then, and must either be in one company or the other—to live with Jesus for ever, or to be cast for ever from his presence.

Would you wish *then* to be numbered among Christ's lambs? go *now* and ask Jesus to make you one. Ask that you may be gathered with his arm, and carried in his bosom.

Pray this little prayer—"O Lord, make ME one of the lambs of thy flock."

I DIE IN JESUS.

A WORD FOR YOUNG MEN.

SUCH were almost the last words of E. R., who departed this life February 22, 1858, ere he had entered his twentieth year. His was a short, painful journey through this valley of tears. At the time I first knew him, he was living in a house of business at T—, in Devonshire, where he was beloved by all, being of a very amiable disposition, and willing to do anything that would add to the happiness of those around him. At this period, however, he was “a stranger to the covenant of promise, without hope and without God in the world.” Two years previous to his own death, it pleased God to take from him his best loved sister. Their loss was her gain. She fell asleep trusting in Jesus. This bereavement proved a blessing in disguise: it led him to think of his condition. He was shown the necessity of a change of heart, in order that he might be prepared whenever the summons should come, “Thy soul is required of thee.” Gradually light broke in on his mind; he saw that he was a sinner; fled to Jesus, the sinner’s Friend, and found peace beneath the shelter of the cross. His health was never very good; but in the commencement of 1857, we saw but too plainly that consumption—the same dire disease which had snatched his sister from him—was making haste to add him to its victims. It was not, however, till the autumn that he was obliged to resign his situation. Through the kindness of a friend who was much interested on his behalf, he was admitted into a private hospital for consumption (for he had no home), and there he passed the few remaining months of his earthly career. As it is often the case in this disease, he at times sanguinely hoped that he should soon be restored to health and activity; but at other intervals was convinced that his days were numbered, and that the “place which then knew him, would soon know him no more.”

I was with him the day before he died. Though he was very emaciated, I did not think he was so near the brink of Jordan, and that he would so soon “see the King in his beauty.” He was one who said but little respecting eternal things. Of this he spoke to me. He remarked—“I never used to be able to speak to others of religion; but I thank God that he has given me grace, since I came here, to tell my fellow-sufferers of the love of Jesus.” He derived much comfort from a

little book I had given him—"The words of Jesus." This was our last meeting on earth. He sank very rapidly at the last. A friend who stood by him, asked if he had any desire to live? He said, "My only wish was, that I might have been spared to glorify God, by bringing others to know Jesus." Shortly after he said to the matron, "Give my dying love to all who knew me, and tell them, I DIE IN JESUS." He then tried to sing, but his voice failed him; and thus his ransomed spirit took its flight. He quitted this earth, which had been to him a weary waste, to take his place in that land where "the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick;" to join that choir who never weary in singing Immanuel's praise. "His sun went down while it was yet day;" but we firmly believe it will rise again in a brighter and a better world.

Youthful reader! you may be called, like E. R., early to exchange worlds. Are you ready? Remember it was trust in Jesus which gave him peace in his last moments. Are you placing your hopes on the Rock of Ages? If so, you need not fear, for "to depart and be with Christ is far better."—*M. F.*

WHERE IS MY CHILD !

Is she not here ! In fancy's dream I see
 The bounding form, so full of childish glee ;
 Feel her sweet kiss, and hear her whisper low,
 Then from my dream awake with bitter woe,
 Knowing the grave has hidden from my eyes
 My earthly prize.

She is not here : oh, it was hard to part !
 Her baby form was twined around my heart.
 How much I loved to hear that gentle voice !
 Its simple tones oft made my heart rejoice ;
 Now that sweet infant tongue has joined to raise
 Her Saviour's praise.

From sin and sorrow she has passed away,
 On angel's wings, to join their perfect lay :
 Earth could no longer hold so fair a flower ;
 And now, though storms may beat and tempests lower,
 She heeds them not ; safe on her Saviour's breast
 She is at rest.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE SPIRIT'S INTERCESSION IN PRAYER.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY MORNING, JULY 12, 1859,

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."—Romans viii. 26.

WHATEVER of good is found in us, whether in purpose or action, is the result of a Divine influence upon the mind. So our Bibles teach us; but it is a fact worthy of notice, that the same truth has been affirmed by men who never saw the Bible. "Never did man attain to true greatness," writes Cicero, in one place, "without being the subject of a Divine inspiration." Whilst another of the ancient philosophers, in a passage yet more remarkable, considered as being written before gospel times, uses the words, "There is a holy spirit which dwelleth within us—as we treat him, so he treateth us, and he it is from whom every good man receiveth both honourable and upright purposes." How these heathen moralists came by this knowledge, except as part of some traditional and half-preserved revelation, it seems hard to explain. One thing is clear, the finding of such a doctrine in fabulous theologies proves it to have been one of the world's naturally expected truths, one which would commend itself to the common feelings and anticipations of mankind—a truth known long before the false systems into which it was admitted, and, that with a length of life which belongs to God's truth only, received a reverence when those systems had passed away. In the Christian Scriptures, of course, the doctrine appears in all its marked prominence and fulness. Starting at first from a fundamental and universal

Mother's Magazine, September, 1859.

fact, "that in us dwelleth no good thing"—we feel, that, if any good thing be found in us, it must be from above, through an influence of the Spirit acting upon our spirit, and implanting tendencies and feelings there, which otherwise we could never have known. And it would be in keeping with the entire analogy of the divine dealings, that this influence should be communicated to mankind in a gradual and progressive form, and so we find it is. Declared to have been at work in the rebellious struggles of the antediluvian world, consciously experienced by the holy men under a later dispensation, this influence of the Spirit becomes, under the new economy, the active and inspiring agency of the whole religious life. To the believer in Christ Jesus, as he journeys through the wilderness of this world, it takes the place of "the pillar of cloud." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." To those who are afraid to lift up holy hands to God, because they see thereon the brands of an ancient servitude, it becomes a new voice and a new tongue. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Thus, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God ;" and when "we know not what to pray for as we ought, the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Let us proceed to consider from these words, first, some of the infirmities which the Christian commonly experiences in the duties of devotion ; and, afterwards, the relief under these infirmities afforded by the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

I. And, first, as to the infirmities which the text here speaks of as being so great a hindrance to us in the act of prayer. The word "infirmities" is of a marked significance here, describing as it does, not so much a mere weakness of our human organization, as a sickness or positive disease in the moral system, indisposing and incapacitating us for the employments which, in a healthy frame of spirit, would be our privilege and delight. And of these infirmities, as experienced in prayer, the forms are manifold. For example, there is ignorance, unskilledness in not knowing how to order our prayer before God, or to bring our spirit to an adequate appreciation of the work in which we are about to engage. Solemn that work is, we know, and much to be accounted of. Prayer is the first utterance of the new man, the sign known and confessed in heaven as evidence of a converted soul. The harps are ready, and the breasts of angels beat high with hope when of some erring and repentant spirit it is declared, "Behold he prayeth." Still, to the penitent himself, on first awaking to any adequate feeling of the importance of such a duty, everything seems strange, and new, and confusd. He wants both thoughts to pray and words to pray. It never used to be so with him. The lifeless formalities of his unconverted state had given him no uneasiness at all. He was never disappointed at the result of his prayers, because nothing was ever expected from them. His moral satisfaction turned upon the outward act—itself the medium, itself the recompense of devotion. Now, however, prayer is felt by him to be one of the most active agencies of his spiritual life, the source of his strength, the solace of his spirit, the exponent of his heart's thoughts to God, the travelling messenger between earth and heaven. And in order to this, the proper object of the devotional act must be realized in prayer. The Divine Being must be felt to be present as an ac-

tual personal subsistence—a power willing to be sought, inclined to hearken, able to relieve, mighty to save. The formalist is at no effort to conceive of the presence of such a being while he is praying. The terminating object of his prayer is the prayer itself, and he does not look behind it. But the moment feelings of needed help and desired peace enter into our prayer, those perfunctory performances no longer satisfy us, we must be brought into near converse with God. We must lay hands directly on our help and hope, we must fill up the void which separates us from the Infinite Being; in a word, we must approach the inaccessible, and look upon the unseen. That this difficulty of framing adequate conceptions of the being to be addressed in prayer discourages many in their first attempt at the exercise will be readily admitted. “Teach us what we shall say unto God,” says Elihu, “for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness.” Whilst Job himself, with all the impatience of a blind man, groping and feeling after something to hold on by, exclaims, “Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even unto his seat; I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.” Indeed, we may not hesitate to include a regard to this form of infirmity as being among the contemplated ends of our Divine Lord’s incarnation. With every desire to conceive of God only in his related character, and to repress any tendencies or proneness in us, to invest him with forms of visible glory, it is undoubtedly a great relief to the mind to turn occasionally to one aspect of the Godhead which may be looked at, and which at the same time may be adored. True, a nice and overcurious definiteness of conception should be guarded against even in our contemplation of the glorified Redeemer. On the mount of transfiguration he appeared encompassed with a bright cloud, an overshadowing glory, a dazzling obscurity, and like unto this, no doubt, with immeasurably transcendent brightness, is his appearance on the Mount of Zion in heaven. The beloved Apostle declared that on seeing him in heaven, he fell at his feet as one dead, but the compassionate Saviour raised him up. The vision was to show to the Apostle what bright things heaven’s shadows were, and yet to show to him and us how through these shadows, these tempered and darkened reflections of the excellent glory, the boundaries of the seen and the unseen might be joined, and dust and ashes speak with a spiritual and incorporeal God.

But another infirmity of the devotional life in which no human aids can help us is the infirmity of mistaken desires, of hurtful and unwise choices in regard to what will make for our true happiness. “The Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities,” says the text, “because we know not what to pray for as we ought;” because we are not fit to be trusted with the deciding of our own lot. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” Sometimes we pray for things positively hurtful to us, as when the Israelites prayed for meat in the wilderness; sometimes we pray for things not wrong in themselves, but yet wrong because in an unsubmitive spirit, as when Rebecca said, “God, give me children, or else I die.” We ask for medicines to be taken away which are working heaven’s kindest cures, and we desire change in our outward lot which can only encompass us with new dangers and snares. All our infirmities of mistaken desire, however, will come under one or other clause of the Apostle’s description; namely, either ignorance of what to pray for, or the inability to pray for it as we ought. In the things we

pray for, we are manifestly liable to the most perilous mistakes. "Lord," said the mother of Zebedee's children, "grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand and the other on the left in thy kingdom." Now, putting aside the ambitiousness of the desire itself, it is very important to observe how specially unsuited the granting of it would have been to those two disciples in particular, to see how fatal would have been the delegation to them at that time of any high and prominent authority; for, as we find a little further on in the history, these are the very two men, who, on receiving an offence at the entrance of a Samaritan village, would have had fire fall down from heaven for the destruction of the inhabitants. Take again, the case of the Apostle himself, when he prayed for the removal of the thorn in his flesh. Thorns, as thorns, he could have borne cheerfully; nay, he tells us that he gloried in tribulation; it was a thorn as Satan's messenger which bowed down his spirit, a thorn as hindering usefulness, as crossing high aims, as casting stumbling blocks in the way of Christ's name and gospel. Oh! who could blame him with such a view of what that thorn was, for his thrice repeated request that it might depart, for desiring that without this hindrance to his ministerial usefulness he might cast in the weight of his influence to spread and vindicate the truth of God. Still, if he were over urgent in the matter, to be blamed he was. Taking up his own inspired language, we should have to say, that Paul knew not what to pray for, and what he was praying for, and the sequel shows it. For the real granting of Paul's prayer was its denial. Never mind the paradox; what I mean is, that the object contemplated by the prayer of the Apostle being spiritual usefulness, that object was accomplished by the denial which could not have been accomplished, or at all events, not so well accomplished by the granting of the prayer. The Apostle, in this case, as he lived to see and acknowledge, was like a foolish father asking for a stone to feed his child. The desired end to feed the child is a good one, and to that God has respect, but the self-chosen means thereto are bad means; and, therefore, God answers the prayer by refusing the stone, but gives the child the bread. Brethren, this is no uncommon case with us. With regard to desired ends, we do not know what we should pray for; but whatever we may profess, it is not the end only to which we are content to look, we commonly insist on the right to prescribe means, and appoint times, and dictate the form and manner in which the blessing is to come to us; and these, far more than the benefits to result from them are the things we most care to pray for. Our language virtually is, 'I desire the profit of chastening, but not that it should come from this chastening; I wish to be crucified to the world, but I should be glad to choose my own cross. I am ready enough to take up the words, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me," but when we find it is not possible, we cannot say so easily, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.'" And this seems to be the infirmity pointed at in the latter part of this clause, that even when we know what to pray for of ourselves, we could not pray for it as we ought; that is, could not pray for it in the spirit of surrendered desire and waiting calmness, a large indefiniteness, which leaves to our heavenly Father a wise latitude in the choice of agencies, and reserves to him his right of fixing times. Brethren, we never pray as we ought when we pray impatiently. All inordinate desires are for our hurt; if they respect a real good they but delay the arrival of the blessing, and if they respect a

good which to us at that time is not good, they may provoke to grant the prayer. No, he that prayeth, just as much as he that believeth, must not make haste. We may make our requests known unto God, but nothing more. To wait in doing, is angel's obedience; and to wait in suffering, is saint's repose. All getting beforehand of God's providential purposes is dangerous speed, and in a strife with God, a victory must be our undoing. "I gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls." For mere relief, then, of any kind, be not over urgent with God. When we find a Jonah in fretful mood saying, "O Lord, I beseech thee, take my life from me;" when we have an Elijah in time of persecution praying for a discharge from his appointed warfare; when we have a Job exclaiming under the pressure of acute anguish, "Oh that I might have my request, that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off"—Oh, can we hear too gratefully that there is a power to overrule our foolish choices, or admit too readily that "we know not what to pray for as we ought."

I note one other infirmity experienced in prayer, and one which he is as yet a stranger to the exercise who has not painfully and often felt, I mean the infirmity of unfixed and unworthy thoughts. You remember the Apostle's prayer for the Corinthians—"That we may attend on the Lord without distraction." It is a word full of meaning that word—"distraction." It describes a mind divided and rent by a multitude of contending thoughts, each demanding our fixed and earnest heed, all attended to in turn, but none appeased. And the Apostle's prayer is, that God's footstool may never be made the place of such unseemly strife, but in that awful presence the heart may be at unity in itself, having one care to absorb, one errand to fulfil, one presence to realise, one voice to hear. Oh, brethren! when alone with God, let us always be alone. Bid worldly projects wait without, or bide a more fitting time. The permitted entertainment of them in the hour of prayer is fatal to the success of our errand. They are as strange fire upon the altar as an allowed blemish in the sacrifice, as shoes upon holy ground. But this is our infirmity, and one which leads to the most humiliating exhibitions of our spiritual influences. Until the Holy Spirit helps us, we can neither fix thought, nor confine desire, nor realise God as present with us, nor feel how great the work is we have got to do. Despite the remonstrance of judgment and conscience, our thoughts set us at defiance; they fly off from our control; they are attracted by each passing vanity, and hearken to the solicitations of each vagrant wish; and heaven's throne is before us all this time, and the ear of God is attention, and angels veiled in the same holy presence, grieve, and wonder, and note down with iron pens the substance of our solemn triflings. And the words and the thoughts are put down side by side—the one all heavenly, the other all earthly; the one reverent, and the other insulting; the one with all show of homage, crying, "Hosanna to the son of

David," the other in silent and unvierd disloyalty, exclaiming, "Let him be crucified!" Oh, brethren, they are not Judas's only that betray their Lord with a kiss, or mock with a show of reverence; still the traitor's mockery and the disciple's mockery are not alike, one mark will distinguish them always, and that is the feeling of grief or satisfaction each leaves behind. The roving thought permitted to run riot in prayer is sin. The same roving thought called back with grief, detained with violence, reined in continually, becomes mere infirmity, and for succour against this, God condescends to be inquired of by us—"The Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities."

II. Such are a few forms of infirmity which beset us in the practical exercise of devotion. I pass on to consider, more briefly, in the second place, in what way the influences of the Holy Spirit may be said to help us against them, for saith the Apostle—"The Spirit helpeth our infirmities"—"maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

And to understand what the nature of this assistance is, we need not go beyond the three principal words used in the text to describe it. The first word is "helpeth," an expression which in one way at least does not admit of an English rendering. It describes the joint bearing with the person helped, of a burden pressing upon both. The burden is not taken off, but there is a sustaining hand underneath which lightens the grievance of the pressure. Now, what do we learn from this? Why, that the infirmities of our holy things are continuing infirmities; that the hindrances to prayer will last as long as prayer itself lasts; that in this life the eye shall never rest on an undimmed and unclouded throne, nor the will be delivered from the importunities of unwise desires, nor the heart be able to throw a chain around its unfixed and straying thoughts, but that we must bear these things as the badges of our dependent and imperfect state, the evidence of that great and hourly need that the Spirit of God should help our infirmities. Remember, then, brethren, in claiming the promise of the text, what it assures you of. It is not deliverance, but help; not a removed burden, but an ability to bear; not the superseded employment of your own exertions and your own means, but a gracious throwing in of the Holy Spirit's succours to make those means effectual. He has power over the spirit to retain the spirit—to confine thought, to control desire, to keep vividly before the mind the presence of the Invisible, to make us frame all our petitions according to the will of God.

The next important word used to describe the help of the Spirit in prayer is, "intercession"—"the Spirit maketh intercession for us." Here we should be careful not to confound the word intercession with the same word when applied to Christ, and thus causing it to appear that the Spirit also is our advocate before the throne of God. But this cannot be. "There is one intercessor between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." And, therefore, in order to clearness in our notions, it may be useful to remember that the in-

tercession of Christ is for us, the intercession of the Spirit is in us ; the intercessions of Christ are to move God, the intercessions of the Spirit are to move and persuade ourselves, the intercessions of the Spirit are to assist us in the act of prayer, the intercessions of Christ are to procure for those prayers acceptance. The Holy Spirit then in the text is said to do that which it enables us to do. It affirms him to be the source, and strength, and food of our whole devotional life. Our sense of need is from him ; our religious desires are from him ; right views of our help and hope are from him. From him comes that unwearied earnestness which faints not, though no answer comes. From him proceeds that wrestling strength which makes us mighty to prevail with God. He is the angel Jehovah of the closet, shedding on our worthless sacrifice his own pure flame, and guiding the heart's grateful incense straight to heaven. And if we bow meekly in the family, he is there ; and in the courts of the Lord's house he is there ; he is the abiding energy of our spiritual and inner man. Sloth creeps over the renewed faculties and he awakes us ; the spirit of bondage has revived upon our souls and he comforts us ; dependency covers the heaven of the soul with blackness, and at his bidding there is light at eventide ; the cares of the world turn our devotions into a sea of tumultuous thoughts, but the Spirit moves upon the face of that sea, and immediately there is a great calm.

Oh ! we know not, we prize not, we think not half enough of what we owe to that Divine Spirit in all the paths and duties of our devotional life. Our hearts are cold, and he re-animates them with a living fire ; our lips are stammering, and he gives us arguments to plead with God ; our affections languish, and he makes them to mount on wings as eagles ; our spirits faint and tire, and he gives us power to pray on, hold on, saying, " I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." He moulds us into the praying frame ; he suggests to us praying thoughts ; he forms in us the praying habit, and thus when we cannot take with us words, when the restlessness of unsatisfied desire makes us disquiet and cast down, when we are feeling darkly after some form of near communion with God, for which language has no name, and thought no title, even then is the soul's work prospering. There is incense going up from the inner altar—" The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

And this leads me to say a word on the last expression of our text—very suggestive, and full of deep instruction. The prayer which is inwrought in the heart of the believer, says the Apostle, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, exhibits itself in the form of groanings which cannot be uttered. Now, it is certain that there are some prayers and some groanings too in which this failing power of utterance is never felt. The Pharisee did not feel it in his long prayers ; the Romanist does not feel it as he counts his beads, nor does the worshipper of any creed feel it as he goes through his morning form, his viaticum for the day's needs. What then is the conclu-

sion ! Why, that such prayers are not of the Spirit's inspiring, and, therefore, are not prayers at all. No, brethren, we are strangers to prayer, to the prayer which is the soul's life and hope, if the walls of our secret chamber have not often borne witness to the groanings which cannot be uttered, the desires which were too full for words, holy longings pent up in the heart's depths, either seeking for vent in broken and incoherent utterances, or dying away in the very helplessness of sighs. Oh, how small a part of his prayer were those words of the contrite publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." They were the mere close of the prayer ; in fact, the prayer had gone before. The abashed look, the smitten breast, the proof of the Spirit of groaning which could not be uttered ; these were his prayers, prayers swifter than an arrow's flight, and louder than the voice of many waters entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and sent him down to his house rejoicing. Be it ours, then, brethren, to discern in our prayers this language of the Spirit's intercession ; let us hearken diligently for this noiseless but heart-stirring voice ; desires have wings to fly when words move not beyond our closet walls ; and though, through the infirmity of ignorance we know not what to pray for ; and, through the infirmity of mistaken desire pray not always as we ought, yet let us remember for our encouragement that "the Spirit itself helpeth our infirmities," and that when we feel ourselves too unworthy to choose, or too weak to ask, this Spirit will make "intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."

Sketches and Essays.

IDOLS.*

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."—1 John v. 21.

My beloved young friends, many are the addresses I have been privileged to give you; with what result God alone knows in its extent. I hope they have been useful to some of you; and if they have, I know who will have been the cause, even God.

I know this also, that they would have been *much more* useful if you and I had prayed over them more than we have. Yea, perhaps, the question is not out of place, if I ask some of you—Have you *ever* prayed for me on these occasions, that I may say such words as shall encourage those who are timid among you, stir up the inactive, help the doubting, and so be useful to many of you in exciting amongst you missionary zeal, and helping you to carry out *practically* in your own lives the precepts of that blessed gospel we desire to send to others?

I have to-day chosen a text which will form the ground-work of some few remarks,—in which I desire to be very plain and simple, to which I hope you will listen with your usual attention, and which I have earnestly prayed may not be uttered in vain: our text says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Now, it is probable that some of you, my dear children, have made a mistake about the text. Perhaps you have thought—This text only applies to those children living in heathen countries (of whom we sometimes tell you anecdotes), to children who *actually* worship images and such-like things; but that it can scarcely apply to you, for you have no idols in your house, you are not an idolator. You do not bow down to stocks of wood and stone, and therefore wonder that I have selected such a text for you to-day. But stop, dear children, for one moment; do not

* From Sunday School Addresses. By Tressillian P. Shipp. Wertheim, Macintosh, and Hunt, Paternoster Row.

be quite so sure that there are no idols in your house, and that you do not worship some of them. I am going to-day to bring out some of these idols for your view: and I hope you will agree with me at the close, that there is a necessity, even in Christian England, and in a Christian school, of sounding in the ears of its scholars the words of our text; "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

In order fully to understand these words, we must first ask, however, What is an idol? Listen to my answer: An idol is anything that occupies that place in your thoughts and affections which ought to be occupied by God. If, therefore, you love anything *better* than God, or even equal with God, however lovely in itself it may be, that becomes your idol.

I say, however lovely in itself it may be, because it does not necessarily follow that it should be something *wicked* in itself to make the object of your love an idol. This you will understand, perhaps, better when I speak of some of these idols which little children (ay, and grown-up people too) sometimes worship.

The first idol I shall speak of is the idol of *SELF*; that is, the idol of your own will and pleasure, which many worship. Now, what do I mean by this? What I mean is this: children set up this idol who like to please their own wills better than to please God; or, in other words, they are *selfish*. So long as they can do as they like, they are very pleasant and happy; but the moment you tell them that what they are doing is contrary to the wish of their heavenly Father, that moment the pleasant smiling face is exchanged for a frown—the open countenance for the contracted brow; and the child prefers to disobey God rather than check even the smallest of its own sinful desires.

Oh, my beloved children, keep yourselves from this idol; let your prayer be in the words of that beautiful hymn you sometimes sing—

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be;
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee."

Try and love religion's ways, and then you will not be selfish; for there is no selfishness in true religion. Let each child look at his or her teacher to-day for a proof of this. Ask yourself, Why has my teacher come to-day? What is it has brought that kind friend here this afternoon? Is it selfishness? Oh, no! selfishness is an idol never wor-

shipped by the true Christian teacher. Self is altogether lost in that one simple, earnest endeavour, with God's blessing, to try and do you good.

Another idol children worship is **WORLDLY PLEASURE**.

Now pray do not misunderstand me. I would not for any consideration willingly cause one of you to stumble at this. Sorry, indeed, should I be if you thought I wished to check your merry laugh or stop your healthful sports so long as you only indulge them at the proper time and within reasonable bounds. I love to hear them, and to share them with you. It would, indeed, grieve me to fill your hearts (full to the overflow as they are of youthful joy) with one unnecessary thought of sadness; for I know full well that care will come upon you quite soon enough, and do that work without.

But, oh, I would earnestly desire this: to impress upon you this one thought, that you must not love your play and pleasures *too much*; I would remind you that there is a time for everything; that there are times when you should be thoughtful, attentive, serious; when you should especially enjoy to talk of religious subjects, and that you should not let your other pleasures intrude when thoughts of better things should be present to the mind. Dear children, then, we say to you, keep yourselves from this idol.

I have thus far been speaking of pleasures, innocent in themselves; but I must not forget that there are sinful pleasures, which often become idols. But if they do there is no happiness for such as worship them; for if you make these your idols, they will destroy you for ever. We counsel you to-day and say, Do not form a liking for sin. Resist the first beginnings of sin. "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Check the first impure thought. Never smile at the unseemly jest, witty though it seem to be; but looking up to Jesus for strength, ask him to enable you to resist temptation, in whatever form it may come, he has promised you shall be more than conqueror; and he is faithful who has promised.

Another idol is **WASTE OF TIME**.

How *many* of our dear children set up this idol! They never think of the end for which they were born, nor of a coming judgment; but only try and kill precious time. Let us look at the case of one of our boys who worships this idol, and see how sad it is in its consequences. We will look at him first as he sits in the *week-day* school. Let us try and picture him to our minds. There he sits in yonder class; is he learning?

is he attentive? is his whole attention fixed? No; although the master is taking pains to inform his mind, to educate him, so that when he leaves his school he shall not go forth to the world as a dunce; yet he pays no heed; he is restless, fidgetty, careless; he leaves his school no wiser than he entered it, and he has added another sin to his list, for he has been wasting precious time.

But I have another of my young friends who worships this idol. I have been looking for him all over the school, but *he is not there*. I call upon his parents; they say he ought to have been there, they sent him. Well, I cannot find him in the school, I must seek him elsewhere; I will take a walk; I may perhaps meet him, for I *fear* he has been playing the truant.

I walk on, and at last I find him. He used to look up at me with a smiling face; but now he seems as though he would give anything not to see me. The truth comes out at last; he has been playing the truant—he has been wasting precious time. Sad fellow! Oh, children, never waste your time by playing the truant; you do not know how much good you lose; you do not know how much evil you get by so doing.

But some of our elder scholars are saying, "Well, I have left school, so your descriptions do not apply to me." Let me see, then, if I have not a word of caution for *you*. Dear young friend, will you mind my going with you, in imagination, into your workshop and see you there? and when there, may I ask you a question or two? Your employer is out; there is no one in the shop with you. Are you as diligent as if your employer was there, or are you wasting precious time? Let me ask you also, when your work is done, and you go home at night, and have an hour or two spare time, how do you spend it? What books do you read? What penny publications do you take in? What is the tone of your general conversation? Do you improve the passing moments by cultivating the mind, or by healthful recreation, or do you *waste your precious time*?

Again, let me ask you *all* about your Sunday. I grieve to say that much precious time is wasted on this holy day. Does any child here set up this idol on Sunday? See if my description of a class in our Sunday school is right, and then let me ask the question.

I look into a class, and what do I see? I see a *teacher*, with affection manifested on his very countenance, and who, with all the *earnestness* he can command, and which the reality of his theme inspires, is urging upon you the acceptance of gospel truths. If I were to look a little closer into that class, I should find *deep concern* also marked upon that

teacher's face, as he realizes somewhat of the responsibility of his office; and if I were to follow that teacher to his home, I should, when night comes, see him kneeling in the retirement of his chamber and earnestly pleading with God that your soul may be converted. Thus does *he* spend his precious time.

But what about the *scholars*? I see one, *two* perhaps, listening to the teacher's voice, drinking in the words of wisdom as they fall from his lips, and gratefully accepting a loving Saviour's offer of mercy. But there are *eight* boys in the class, what are the other six doing? Oh, they have brought their idols into their class! They are worshipping them, regardless of the day or the place. They are wasting precious time. The teacher speaks, but they heed him not; he earnestly entreats, but he gets no attention from them; they are too much engaged with their idol; they prefer wasting precious time.

But they do not only waste it in the school-room. Follow these youths as they leave the school-room this very afternoon, and what shall we see?

Watch them as they are walking home, *wasting precious time*. Thoughts not the purest, conversation not the most godly, engage their attention, and thus the golden hours of the blessed Sabbath pass away and bear their record in heaven against them of another Sabbath *lost*.

Oh, children, what can I say to influence you to keep from this idol? Do not waste a single moment of this precious day! Love the precious moments of the Sabbath, moments precious beyond description, precious as bringing with them thoughts of heaven and heavenly things. Would that they did not pass so quickly away! Would that they did not come only one day in seven, but that it were *always* Sabbath! It will soon be so. Let us each, then, try this very afternoon to realize some of the blessedness of this sacred day. "Let no vain thoughts disturb our breasts." Let God and heaven and heavenly joys, let Christ and his salvation be our themes; and by these earthly Sabbaths may our souls be fitted and prepared to spend that eternal Sabbath in God's kingdom above, a Sabbath which will know no end.

I CAN DO SOMETHING FOR JESUS.*

UP with the merry birds was Willie, and when he had dressed himself, he took the Bible his mother had given him and read of him he had learnt to love so dearly, and then knelt by his little bed and asked his dear Saviour to keep and bless him, to make him a child of his, and to help him in doing all things for his sake.

Then little Willie thought how pleased Annie would be if he were to go and get her some flowers ready to make the garland for Mary: but then the thought struck him, how much pleasanter it would be to get them with her later, than to go alone; and too, he thought he would much prefer going on with a ship he was making. "Well now," said Willie to himself, "I don't know which to do; I would rather go with Annie presently, and get on with my ship now; but no, that won't do, for I want most of all things to please Jesus, and I can do this by doing things for those he loves. By getting the flowers for dear Annie, I shall be helping her and making her very happy, so I'll go." So saying, he took his basket and knife, and went on his search.

And how happy Willie felt, how much happier than if he had merely followed his own wishes. By eight o'clock he got back to his home, and as he came into the little shady lane leading to the gate, he saw Annie running to meet him. "Oh, Willie dear, where have you been?" she said; "I've been hunting everywhere for you. Oh, what lovely flowers! How did you get them? Where have they come from? Those pure white lilies, Willie dear, how very, very lovely!"

"They are all yours, Annie. I thought if I went before breakfast for them, you could let Mary have the garland quite early."

"How very kind of you, dear Willie. I thought to be sure you would be hard at work at your ship, and was astonished not to find you there; and when I asked father just now where you were gone, he said he did not know, but thought he had seen you go out with your basket a long time ago. And have you really been all the way to the long lane for me? Why, you must have been farther still for these lilies: they grow in the vale. And your ship, dear Willie; you want so to finish your ship. How very kind of you. How happy you have made me!"

* A little Work, just published, by Wertheim, Macintosh and Hunt, Paternoster Row.

“Then, Annie, I have done just what I wanted to do. Don’t think I had no selfish thought before I started, for I knew I could get on well with my ship as it was so early. But then I thought of you and your joy; and, Annie, I had another thought. It was, I can do something for Jesus; and that is what I wish so very much; and though we are only little children, yet he loves the little tiny things we can do for him. Don’t you remember how our sweet mother used to tell us how we could serve him, and how her pale face always lighted up when she spoke of him. Oh, Annie dear, when I think of her now, I long to be as much like Jesus as she was, and then perhaps he would take me home too.”

“Oh no, Willie dear,” said Annie putting down her flowers that she might throw both arms round her brother, “never talk of going away from me. What could I do without you? Now come; I’m sure breakfast is ready; we’ll just put our flowers in water, then we can set to work about our garland very soon, and Mary can have it directly; and we are to go and have tea with her this afternoon. How happy I am!” And little Annie skipped into the house with her flowers, leaving Willie to follow more quietly.

“Now then, Willie come; you can hand me the bunches of flowers as I’m ready for them, and I’ll soon twist them round these hoops to form the garland; don’t you like holidays, Willie? I do.”

“I think,” said Willie, “these have been very happy; but I do miss dear mother so often, more I think than when we are at school.”

“Yes, I miss her too; but Willie, I think the time I miss her most, is when I have been in bed for a little while. You know she always came and talked to us a little before we went to sleep, about the bright home where Jesus is; and when she left me, I always asked her to leave your door wide open, that I might hear her voice speaking to you; and then, Oh, Willie dear, I miss so very much that gentle low, “God bless you my precious child,” she always whispered when she left our rooms. But Willie, I did not mean to make you cry, and it makes all the tears come into my eyes too: and we ought not to cry on Mary’s birthday.”

“Annie, dear, how I wish I had not so often grieved her; my quick, hasty temper is always leading me wrong; and then she was anxious I should know and love Jesus; but somehow when she was here, I did not care about it, for I loved her oh, so very dearly; but, Annie, one thing is a great comfort to me: I am quite sure God heard her prayer for her child; for he has taught me to love Jesus, and she prayed so much that

he would. I wonder if she knows now, that I do love him? I like to think she does."

"Oh, yes, Willie darling, auntie told me the other night she thought the spirits of those we once loved here on earth were often with us still; so, if so, she must know you love Jesus. Now give me the white flowers to go all along the top? I know they are your favourites, are they not? I wonder why you like white flowers so much?"

"Because, dear, they are so pure, they always put me in mind of the dress, our mother wears in heaven; 'white robes' they wear there, the Bible says; they put me in mind of the time when all my sins will be washed away in the blood of Jesus, and I shall be clean and white. Why, now you have finished the garland; how pretty it is, how very nicely you have done it; now are we going to take it to Mary, or how are you meaning to manage it, eh, little Mrs. Manager."

"I think we can very well run down to the farm before dinner, and take it to her, don't you? Then directly after dinner, you know Willie, we are to go to her. How pleased little Walter will be, he always is when Mary is happy; how sad it is to think he is always to be a cripple—all his life. Auntie says she thinks he gets more and more lame; and that soon he won't be able to walk at all. Willie, dear, sometimes I wish, when I read of Jesus healing the sick, and making the blind to see, and the lame to walk, I do so wish he was here now to cure poor Walter; but don't you think he could even now, for the Bible says he is the same now he was a long time ago? Oh, how I wish he would!"

"Annie, dear, I once talked to our mother about this, and I told her I wanted to ask Jesus to make Walter well; but though I don't quite remember all her words about it, I recollect she said Walter's lameness might be his greatest blessing; for she said any affliction sent to us by God, might bring us very close to him, because you know, Annie dear, they make us more dependent on him; and she said by showing a quiet, gentle, patient, feeling, we could often do more for Jesus, than by many great works, very strong men can do. I think little Walter often shows us a lesson in this, for how good and patient he is; and, too, when Charlie teazes him and is very rough with him."

"Oh yes, Willie, I do love Walter; but now let us go. But you look so tired; I wish I knew what it is that makes you so often look pale and tired—it comes all on a sudden; Willie, do you feel very tired?"

"No, not very; you know darling it is hot to-day; now then let us

go, we can put the garland across this pole, and carry it so between us ; can't we ?"

"Yes, only don't be tired ; for Willie," said the little girl, sinking her voice into a low whisper, "when you look so pale it makes me think of mother, and how she looked when we put the white flowers round her ; you are so like. Oh, are you ill ?"

"No, no dear, I'm not ill, only rather tired ; so now come."

Over the meadow and across a small running stream, where Willie and Charlie had managed to put a plank across, to make the distance between their homes shorter, the children went till they reached the stile into the field leading to the farm, the home of Charlie, Mary, and little lame Walter. As they crossed this field they heard a shout of pleasure, and looking up they saw Walter sitting on a low chair, under the shade of a large oak close to the house. Willie and Annie hastened their steps, and as they came up to where the child sat, he said, while his pale face glowed, and his large blue eyes grew bright with delight, "I thought you would both come, so I asked Mary to put my chair out here, that I might get the first glimpse of you from the stile. "Oh, I'm so glad you are come, and so will Mary be. What lovely flowers : how beautifully that garland is made ; is it for Mary ?"

"Yes, Walter, dear, and Annie made it all herself ?"

"Oh, but Walter, Willie got all the flowers before breakfast, this morning, instead of working at his ship that he wants so to get finished."

"Dear Willie," said the poor little boy, the tears gathering in his eyes, as he looked full of love at his friend.

"Now, where is Mary ?" said Annie.

"She is in the house ; and if you will lend me a helping hand, Willie, we can go to her."

They were just moving towards the house when Mary came running to them. Willie and Annie both called out to her, "Many happy returns of the day, Mary dear ;" and Annie passing on before the two boys went up to her, saying, "will you accept this garland, with Willie's and my love, and he hopes that, though these flowers must die, they will now remind you of the beauties of heaven that never can die ; and Mary," and Annie's voice sank lower, "the white flowers put him in mind of our mother's dress, now so pure white."

"Thank you, dear, and you too, Willie, for this beautiful present ; I do like it so very much ; it was so kind of you both to think about it ; and it is so beautifully made."

Then Walter told Mary how the flowers were procured; and Willie told them why it was he had given up his own wishes and gone for them.

"And now, Annie, I think we shall be late for dinner, if we stay longer; and we are to come back, soon after, you know."

"Oh, yes, we will go now; but, Mary, where is Charlie?"

"He went this morning with father to Mossbank; but he is to be back in time for our tea."

"Well, then, Mary dear, we shall be back soon after dinner; good-bye now."

"Yes, please, don't be late," said Walter.

ALFRED THE GREAT.*

FROM A.D. 873 TO A.D. 935.

"The same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer."—Acts vii. 36.

ALFRED, like his father and grandfather, called himself King of Wessex, though, like them, he was acknowledged by the other Kings as superior, far beyond the Bretwalda of earlier days.

The Danes were so powerful when he came to the throne, that it was hoping against hope to expect to conquer these fierce invaders. Yet, if any man in England was fitted for the task, it seemed to be Alfred, for he was not only a brave soldier and a skilful commander, but pious, learned, and intelligent beyond most of his countrymen, though he was still young—only twenty-two.

Perhaps it will surprise many to hear that, at twelve years old, Alfred could not read; but the early education of even king's sons was little thought of in those days, and, beyond the fitting them for leading armies and protecting their people, they were not required to study, and few were themselves anxious to become scholars.

But, if the Saxons were not a studious people, there was one thing in which they excelled most nations of that day: it was respect for women, which is always a proof of good in the character. The wives and mothers of our own land are not better treated now than were those of the Anglo-Saxons in the times of the Heptarchy. (Turner's "Anglo Saxons.")

* From *My Country*. Edited by the Rev. John H. Broome. Published by Wertheim, Mackintosh and Hunt, Paternoster Row.

Alfred had lost his own mother, but his father had married a French Princess, named Judith, who was very little older than her young stepsons, but who had been much better educated. She was shocked at their ignorance, and tried, by engaging kindness, to persuade them to learn. One day she showed them a beautiful book full of paintings, and read from the book the explanations of these paintings. When she saw they had become interested in her book, and admired it exceedingly, she told them it should belong to him who could first read it.

Alfred's elder brothers thought the prize not worth the trouble, and perhaps they would have been right, if the possession of the book was to be the end of all their pains. But the young Queen knew, if once she could persuade them to learn to read, they would probably seek information from books, and find pleasure in improving their minds. And she was right. Alfred diligently set to work, and soon obtained the prize. But how much he and his country owed to this gentle lady for awakening in him that taste for study which was to fit him to raise England from the ignorance into which it had sunk, who can calculate?

What an encouragement is this to young people to endeavour to do good! No one can tell what God will accomplish by little means. She who led Alfred to commence that course from which England even now benefits, was, at the time, only sixteen.

Alfred had begun to taste the pleasures of knowledge, and he took the greatest delight in learning. God early led him to the best wisdom—the knowledge of his Saviour; and no doubt the trials of the first eight years of his reign were intended to be like fire to gold, which does not destroy it, but renders it more pure.

But, before Alfred could improve his people, he must get rid of the Danes; and, as their fleets were continually bringing fresh foes, he wisely thought the only way to conquer would be to destroy their ships. This he attempted as soon as he became King, and with great success; for Alfred's little fleet (the beginning of the famous English navy) destroyed, aided by a storm, between 100 and 200 Danish vessels. (A.D. 876.)

By land, however, Alfred was continually defeated, and if he did win a battle, it was immediately followed by such a defeat, that he found he was losing ground from day to day.

Alfred had not at that time so won his people's love as to make them willing to exert themselves to the utmost for his sake. It was not surprising that a young king, who must have felt himself so much wiser

than the nobles around him, should have been tempted to pride; and, as Alfred was always in ill health, and was often in great pain, he might easily have given way to impatience. We are told that this was the case; and as God loved him, and intended him for great things, he needed first to be taught humility, and to correct those sins which would have interfered with his usefulness.

At length, Alfred found his subjects so thoroughly disheartened, and the Danes so completely masters of the country, that he had no more power to oppose them, and, indeed, was obliged to conceal himself from his foes. Alone, and in the dress of a private soldier, Alfred contrived to escape from the Danes, who very nearly took him prisoner. (A.D. 878.)

After concealing himself some time, he at length arrived in Somersetshire, at a spot too marshy for the enemy to pursue him, and was kindly received by a poor man, named Denulf, as a Saxon flying from Danish cruelty. Denulf had no idea that the fugitive he so kindly sheltered was his King. Indeed, it was so little suspected that we are told an amusing story of a scolding which the good wife gave him for neglecting some bread which she had desired him to watch, and which he forgot to turn, so that it was burned. The patience with which he bore her just reproaches, proved that humiliation was doing the work for which it had been sent.

His subjects, too, were all this time made to feel a yoke far more severe than any their king would have laid on them, and began to long for his return. The cruelty of the Danes at length obliged them to arm in self-defence. They surprised their foes, defeated them, and took their famous standard, which was in the shape of a raven. Many superstitious notions were connected with this standard, which was supposed to flap its black wings in battle, and to bring victory to those who carried it in their armies. So the Danes were quite as much disheartened by its loss as by the victory the Saxons had gained.

Alfred saw his time was come, and made known his retreat to a few of his nobles. He headed several attacks on Danish troops; and when he found the people were impatiently calling for Alfred, and that they seemed to need only a popular commander to lead them on to victory, he summoned his subjects to meet him in Selwood Forest ready for battle. An immense army collected, Alfred led them to the attack, and the Danes were completely defeated. They begged for peace, which Alfred granted, upon condition that no Dane should remain in England who would not consent to be baptized, and to settle quietly on land he gave

them to cultivate in the north-east of the country. Those who still continued idolators were to return to their own country. (A.D. 880.)

Nothing could show us more plainly how much ignorance there was among the Saxons as to the nature of true religion, than that such a man as Alfred should have desired to see those Danes baptized before they had learned to know anything about Christ. What could such a profession of Christianity be but a mere mockery, except as it opened the door to their instruction? for Alfred immediately sent persons to teach them. What sort of teachers they were we cannot tell, for Alfred complains that the clergy were almost ignorant, knew little of their Bibles, and very few understood the meaning of the prayers they offered in Latin* among the still more unlearned congregations.

It is plain that Alfred had not the advantage of good teaching from his ministers. But the Spirit of God had himself been pleased to reveal to him those most precious truths which made him wiser than his teachers.

Alfred had found profit in studying the word of God, and believed nothing else could raise the character of his subjects. A pious and learned man, named Aldhelm, had given them a translation of the Psalms into Saxon in 706. Bede had translated for them a great part of the Bible, if not the whole of it, a hundred years before Alfred's reign. But there were few copies left, and, even if the poor could have obtained these, the language had, by degrees, so much altered that the unlearned could not have profited by them.

Alfred, therefore, resolved to make a new translation, and he assembled all the learned men he could find that they might prepare it. He himself took a share in the work, choosing the Psalms, and some other portions; but as he did not understand Hebrew, he must have translated from the Latin version of the Bible, and not from the original Scriptures.

In order that the people might be able to use the word of God thus preparing for them, Alfred established schools in different parts of the country, and, among others, one at Oxford, which is now become a great University.† After this time those who wished to give part of their

* Latin prayers were not only used in the Anglo-Saxon Church, but the Irish and British Churches also used them."—*King's "Church History of Ireland."*

† A.D. 886. Cambridge, the other English University, is said to have been founded by his son Edward, A.D. 915.

property to promote education would naturally place the pupils they supported near famous schools, where learned men were likely to be found as teachers; and thus college after college arose, till the Universities became what they are now.

AN ALPHABET OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELS AND CAUTIONS.

Aim at the promotion of God's glory—at the destruction of sin—at the overthrow of Satan—at the conversion of sinners—and at the perfection of Christian character.

Beware of sloth in secret duties, and of pride in public duties; of envy in adversity, and of self-consequence in prosperity; of self-confidence in labouring for God, and of self-complacence when your labours are crowned with a blessing.

Confess your sins with penitence, your mistakes with ingenuousness, and your ignorance with humility. He who never says to God, "I have sinned," cannot possess the pleasures of pardon. He who never acknowledges his errors, cannot enjoy human friendship; and he who affects to know more than he does, will remain ignorant of many things which he might have been acquainted with.

Delight much in God's glorious character, holy words, moral image, beauteous works, wise providences, and sublime institutions.

Enquire of God for direction—of past experience for warning—of the cross for motives—and of the cloud of witnesses for encouragement.

Fear God with filial fear—sin with holy fear—the world and Satan with cautious fear—and yourself with jealous fear.

Get truth into the judgment—the atonement into the conscience—God's love into the heart—the promises into the memory—and the coming of Christ into the eye. This will be obeying the Divine commandment, "Get wisdom."

Help the poor with your property—the ignorant with your knowledge—the sorrowful with your sympathy—and all with your prayers.

Instruct your families from the Bible—the church by your gifts and graces—the world by your example and influence—and yourself by observation and meditation. But attempt nothing without first sitting at the feet of Jesus, and seeking the help of the Holy Spirit.

Join courteousness with faithfulness—gentleness with zeal—spirituality with diligence in business—and prayer with everything.

Know the Lord, and trust him always—know your own heart, and suspect it constantly—know your friends, and treat them kindly—know your spiritual foes, and watch them narrowly.

Lament over the sins of your unregeneracy—over your daily faults and shortcomings—over a weak and divided Church—over a deluded and dying world—over God's will hated and his mercy slighted. While thus lamenting, avoid false humility, sweeping censures, and misanthropic feelings.

Mix faith with hearing—confidence with prayer—hope with affliction—kindness with reproof—candour with reports about others—and the salt of grace with your common conversation.

Note the providences of God towards you with gratitude—the operations of his Spirit in you with hope—and the watchfulness of the world and Satan over you with attention. Recorded providences, or cherished convictions, are most valuable.

Open your mouth wide at the throne of grace—slowly in conversation—thoughtfully in affliction—and not at all in publishing or repeating the faults of others, except when it is plain that the honour of God requires it.

Persevere in seeking to know more of Christ—to feel the more of the operations of the Holy Spirit—to do more for the Church of God—to grieve more on account of sin and over sinners—and to rejoice more in God's character, promises, and glory.

Quench not the Spirit by any means; but quench the fires of sin, Satan, and strife by all means. Quench not the kindlings of liberality or zeal, in yourself or others, by procrastination or fear of singularity.

Reverence God's name, and never use it thoughtlessly—God's book, and bow to its decisions—God's house, and frequent it prayerfully, punctually, and constantly—a brother's character, and vindicate it, if truth will allow—the acts and sayings of the wise and good, and endeavour to imitate them.

Sacrifice your own will and opinion to God's verdict—man's applause for God's approbation—your own ease for his service—and all the treasures of earth for his presence.

Try to be *affectionate* in the family—*affable* in all your intercourse in society—*awake* to your own proper sphere and duty—and *active* in the Church of God. The way to be all this, is to be *attentive* to truth, and

alive to the closet. A Christian must not be a wasp nor a drone; let him rather imitate the dove, and learn of the ant.

Use the world without abusing it—the relations of life without idolising them—the truth of God without preventing it—and all means, friends, instruments, without trusting any.

Visit the Bible to learn wisdom—the throne of grace to obtain strength—the sick, the dying, and the poor, to cure discontent—Calvary, to augment love—and hell, heaven, and judgment, to crush a worldly spirit.

Work for God—work while it is called to-day—work *humbly*, for without Christ you can do nothing—work *penitently*, for your best actions are very imperfect—work *hopefully*, for you serve a kind Master and a rich Rewarder—work *CAREFULLY*, for he marks the heart and records the motives—work *PERSEVERINGLY*, for only those who endure unto the end shall be saved—work *lovingly*, for Jesus did, angels do, and all the saved shall eternally.

Yearn after daily fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, and daily conformity to him in his meekness and gentleness. Yearn to yield yourself entirely to God, and to be a means of bringing others to him.

Zealously plead for God—spread truth—and mortify sin; and thus prove that you belong to that peculiar people, who are zealous of good works.

Thus every letter in the alphabet has afforded us some counsel, with the exception of the letter X; but we must press even this letter into the cause of truth and holiness. There is no English word that commences with X; several Greek words do; and the letter is *very useful* in many English words, as *exhort*, *fixed*, &c. Let us, then, learn this lesson—that we may do good service in the Church and in the world, although we never appear in the front ranks, or shine as the *leaders* of others. Some professors will not *build* unless they are architects or master builders; nor *fight*, unless they *command*; nor *watch*, unless *they* can be *observed*. This is not a right spirit; it shows that they *think* (whatever they may say) that no one can do things so well as themselves. Many private or afflicted Christians, with few gifts, but who are rich in grace, are a great blessing to the Church, by their prayers, influence, and example; while those who have shining gifts, or large possessions, united with bad tempers, worldly dispositions, or a haughty, harsh, overbearing carriage, do a great deal more harm than good. Our importance to the Church is to be estimated by the degree in which we reflect the image of Christ, and procure the presence of the Holy Spirit. A day is coming when many a great *I* will wish himself an humble X.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

TRIFLING WITH IMPRESSIONS.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 4, 1859,

BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

(Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty, and Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's,)

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON.

"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away."—Hosea vi. 4.

THIS is one of those passages of Scripture—very far from infrequent—in which God seems to represent himself as actually at a loss, not knowing what else could be done to produce piety in hearts which had heretofore resisted the strivings of his Spirit. The language is like that which any one of us would employ after he had tried every known method of making an impression, and then felt baffled and perplexed, not willing to give the thing up, and yet feeling as though there were no resource left. "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?" They are the words of a being who has made many efforts, and who is ready to make more, but who feels as if he has not strength and ability enough—not knowing what else to attempt, nor with what new engines to work; and yet, if you observe what these particular circumstances were which thus seemed to bring even Omnipotence to a stand, (because even God himself then seemed as if nothing was in his power,) you will not find them such as might at first sight have been expected to produce such a result. God does not proceed, as you might have expected, to charge upon Ephraim and Judah an absolute insensibility. He does not accuse them of being entirely unmoved by all the means which he had ever taken to move them. He does not declare himself at a loss to know what to do, because all he had hitherto done had failed to make the least impression. On the contrary, it had made an impression, but that impression had not been permanent, and just on this account it was—just because the impression was only transient, that God represented himself as at a loss—his resources exhausted, his purposes frustrated, for "Your goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." This is the reason God assigns for his perplexity. There were some indications of goodness; some convictions of sin, some impressions of past guilt were pro-

Mother's Magazine, October, 1859.

duced. Resolutions of amendment were made, and were even partially carried into practice, but at the first impulse of temptation all these promising appearances vanished, just as the cloud disperses and the dew exhales before the sun shining in its strength. Therefore we are clearly taught by the text that there can hardly be a less hopeful condition than that of a man on whom a weak impression has been made, but on whom it has not been abiding. Ah, here is a most important subject of discourse—God at a loss because those on whom he acts are unstable—because though they have those convictions, those convictions are transient. This is a representation set before us, and from this we are forced to conclude that a man is never in greater spiritual danger than when, after having been excited to some measure of solicitude and diligence for his soul, he relapses into indifference or worldliness.

In order to exhibit this, and to exhibit it in a manner most likely to come home to our souls, let us examine, in the first place, what that case is which is described as “A goodness like a morning cloud, which goeth away ;” and, secondly, let us consider why such a case should produce the touching, the startling words—“O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee ! O Judah, what shall I do unto thee !”

Now, wishing to treat this subject in the manner most likely to come home to your souls, we affirm, at once, that the character or style of the preaching to which men are accustomed to listen will determine, in a great degree, the particular moral danger to which they are exposed. If there be nothing in the preaching which is calculated to excite and fasten the attention, the likelihood is, that however faithful that preaching may be, it will leave a great mass of hearers wholly indifferent to religion. If on the other hand, the preaching be of a different kind, addressing itself wholly to the intellect or imagination, the likelihood is that there will be awakened a great deal of passing interest, that numbers will be aroused for a time to manifest an anxiety for the soul, but not having in themselves the root of the matter will presently relapse into their original apathy. Cold preaching is likely to leave men in their natural torpor, and fervid preaching is likely to communicate a warmth which may be mistaken for the glow of spiritual life, but which proceeding only from excited sensibilities, and not from a renewed heart, will immediately depart when the stimulating causes are withdrawn. Hence we find frequent cases of a goodness which is as the morning cloud, and which goeth away as the early dew.

Apply to yourselves what we shall venture to assert, and let your own consciences decide whether we sketch from the life. A clergyman dare not assert—would to God he might—that many of those who throng to his church are converted through the word which he is enabled to deliver ; but I will tell you what perhaps he is not going too far in venturing to assert—that many are often temporarily alarmed and made uneasy by his representations of their danger, and brought to form resolutions of repentance and amendment. We are well persuaded that out of such an assembly as the present, many a conscience is painfully aroused, if the preacher put forth a vivid description of God's wrath against transgressors ; and that there are men and women on whom an earnest and faithful remonstrance will produce the effect of a feeling of danger and a determination to avoid it. As they go forth from the sanctuary who can tell, although the great mass may be

as indifferent as when they entered it, that here and there may not be found those on whom something of a moral impression has been made, and who bear away the word they have heard, which so faithfully describes their own feelings! So that you might suppose that the preacher had effected more than we just now delineated, and that a mere animal excitement is not a sufficient description of their state; that there is a consciousness of danger, and a resolution of shunning it. Nevertheless the description is practically sufficient; the imagination has been wrought on by the pictures presented, but the real effect is that it might be equally wrought on had the preacher dilated on the terrors of shipwreck, or the horrors of famine, or had he given all his powers to a description of fearful and disastrous occurrences by which his audience might be affected, and the representation of which to the fancy is calculated to agitate all the feelings and to move his congregation even more than reality. If you would determine that in the case referred to there has been more than animal excitement, you have only to follow one of the multitude for a time who seem to carry away with them the desired impression. Alas, they take no pains to fix and deepen those impressions; they do not betake themselves at once to private prayer, beseeching God not to suffer them to forget what they have heard. They return forthwith to old habits and pursuits, in place of endeavouring to detach themselves from things against which they have been warned, the only difference being that there is a slight sense of uneasiness which will quickly wear away, and which, while it lasts, wrings from them a promise that they will ere long commence what they believe to be needful. And then, perhaps, they come again to the sanctuary, but that impression is taken away and almost obliterated, for as it has been well said, the preacher of all workmen seldom finds his work as he left it. Perhaps the preacher may again succeed in arousing the attention; he may again dismiss his hearers with something of a conviction of sin and a dread of God's vengeance, but then the same process is repeated, there is again the neglect of private prayer, again the conceding to the world all its former opportunities of engrossing the affections, and what is the preacher to say of cases such as these! If he have amongst his audience men and women who can listen to him with a revived interest as he expounds to them the Gospel of Christ; who Sunday after Sunday will drink in the truth from his lips, conscious of its force, and confessing themselves, that it lays them under the obligation to lead a new life, but who throughout the week are still found amongst the worldly halting between two opinions, putting off all impressions of what they have been taught to be sinful and dangerous, and neglecting the duties in which they have been entreated to engage. Oh, what, we ask, can the preacher say of all these indications of piety, which to a superficial observer are so rich in hopeful promise, if not what God said in regard of Ephraim and Judah, that there is a "goodness which is as the morning cloud," and which "goeth away as the early dew!"

And if energetic and affectionate preaching will make impressions on hearers which, if they do not prove permanent, give abundant promise of a renewal of nature, who knows not that afflictions of one kind and another exert all that softening influence which might be expected to issue in thorough conversion! Ah, my brethren, if the clergyman visit any of you when overtaken by sickness, or when calamity has made its inroad into your families, how disposed does he find you to listen to his voice, to confess the

necessity of giving heed to religion, and to deplore the neglect with which it has been heretofore treated ! If we speak with a man who has suffered some great loss in property, we find him all alive to the importance of seeking the treasure that is in heaven. If we talk to children whilst a father or mother lies dead in the house, they are ready to bind themselves at once to take the Lord as their God, and to dedicate themselves unreservedly to his service. And if it be a child whom death has removed, how do the parents as they bend over the corpse and bedew it with their tears, acknowledge that God has not smitten without cause, and express their fervent hope that he may not smite in vain. But it is melancholy and disheartening to observe how rapidly those promising appearances often vanish. The man whom conscience affrights on a sick bed, and who when moved by the pressure of pain and the near prospect of death, unreservedly confesses the sinfulness of his life, and resolves to amend it—if his days are prolonged, is he the man whom that minister afterwards sees so engrossed with worldly pursuits, so anxious for the present, and so unmindful of the future ? The man again who was startled by the sudden death of a neighbour or friend, and whom the minister found all prepared in consequence to meet God, is he the man who is now living as though he had no soul, and as though he had obtained a lease for fifty years more of life ! And these parents who are now walking the round of dissipation and vanity—no family prayer in their houses, no marked attention to personal and domestic religion—can these be they who so recently wept in bitterness of spirit and vowed that their sorrow should make them seek happiness in God ! Are those young persons who seem never pleased but when engaged in frivolous amusements—whose very soul seems to be in dress and pleasure, in midnight dances and the public show—can these be they who but a few months back expressed their distaste for all the follies and gew-gaws of earth, and who were ready to take the coffin of a father or mother as an altar, and take a solemn pledge to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world ! Alas ! alas, it is even so. They are the same parties, and the ministers hopes have been raised only to be disappointed. It is not that there was actually any insincerity in these parties—any hypocrisy. They really felt at the time all that they seemed to feel. It is only that there is a softening power in sorrow of every description—a power of rendering malleable the harshest and most rugged natures, so as to receive impressions which under other circumstances they would not receive ; and, therefore, if the minister visit a person who is suffering under affliction he has to act upon susceptibilities subjected to fire, and made yielding. He finds great facility in working them into certain forms, and stamping them into certain characteristics. But take the metal out of the fire, it is as hard as ever. There must be some other action to succeed to that of mere sorrow, or else there would be a relapse, a return to the former condition. Grief does but make way for the working of the conscience ; it cannot take the office of conscience in changing the heart, and renewing the nature, but it disposes men to those operations of God's Spirit in which alone can be effected a restoration of God's image. And if men under the influence of sorrow would set themselves at once to the performance, and not content themselves with the mere making of resolutions—if they were much in prayer that the afflictions might be sanctified—if they were much in effort that repentance should regulate their habits, and if they were aware of the

soothing power of time, and of the certainty with which agitated feelings would quickly subside into their ordinary channels, they would be upon their watch that higher agencies should succeed when those feelings no longer operate. They would, indeed, have cause to confess with the Psalmist, that it was good for them when they were afflicted, and the disquieted spirit would give place to the broken and contrite heart which is God's best sacrifice. But the evil is, that men virtually mistake the action of grief for the action of conscience. They suppose themselves convinced of sin because subdued by sorrow, and feeling a tenderness of spirit, a facility and readiness to talk upon spiritual things, and a wish for personal religion, of which they were not conscious before, they hastily, too hastily conclude themselves changed; whereas they are as yet just what they were, except as stripped of some object in which they have taken delight. Therefore does it necessarily come to pass, that as the grief wears away, all that has had the semblance of religion wears away too. Time closes the wounds which might have been as apertures through which grace might have penetrated to the recesses of the heart, and he who had supposed himself abstracted from the world, finds himself again encircled by all its fascinations. Indeed, that darkness and cloud has been only, as the morning cloud, suddenly dispersed by the glittering objects of earth, and the tears which fell from his eyes have been but as the early dew evaporated by the returning smiles of prosperity.

This seems to have been especially the case conceived of by God in the words of our text. When Ephraim and Judah were visited by the judgments of God they displayed great submissiveness; they laid down good resolutions in the full determination to adhere to them for the future, but no sooner was the pressure removed than they gave themselves to sin the same as before, and it was not till the judgments were repeated that they bethought themselves again of their duties and of their sins. Alas, my brethren, what is this but the too faithful portrait of many amongst ourselves! Forgetful of God except in adversity, unmindful of him whilst he is loading us with bounties, and thinking of him only when we have provoked him to anger; forming resolutions when immersed in trouble, only to be broken when delivered from its waves; meek and humble as slaves when under the rod, and insolent as rebels when the rod is removed—he can know but little of the characteristics of man, who does not recognize in this his ordinary condition.

And when a minister considers how trials and troubles invade his congregation—how many families are broken in upon by death—how many are tried by pecuniary losses—how many are harassed by grinding necessity; when he further considers what vows have been made, what resolutions formed, what hopeful appearances presented, what cheering indications of abandonment of the world, what settled purposes of giving heed to the safety of the soul—and then, when notwithstanding the great influx of trials, and the corresponding production of much that is promotive of piety, he perceives what an indifference there still is to religion—what an attachment to earthly things, what pride, what covetousness—how must he not declare that there is now as there was in the days of Ephraim and of Judah, a “goodness which is as a morning cloud, and which goeth away as the early dew.”

And now we leave the causes that produce a temporary attention to religion. We have said enough to satisfy the conscience of many amongst you, that we describe no imaginary case, that it is a thing of sad reality, that many begin religion and then suddenly stop ; that there is a conviction of sin which does not end in conversion, and that as there is a twilight which precedes darkness as well as one which precedes the dawn, so there is a glimmering of spiritual intelligence which is followed by denser shadows as well as one which is the herald of the rich and warm sunshine. But why is the case so bad, for bad it must be, inasmuch as God is represented as pausing to consider whether more could be done, other plans tried, other means employed ? It is this which we would wish you to observe, that if religious impressions have been produced and then erased the heart must be even harder than it was. It is the property of our nature, nay, it may be it is a retribution from God. How very striking and very solemn are the words of Augustine :—"The facility with which we commit certain sins is a punishment for sins already committed." But in any case it is the property of our nature that the doing of a thing makes it easier to do it again. It is so in regard to what is virtuous, and it is so in regard to what is vicious. There is an ever increasing facility in following after good and in yielding to evil, so that by repeating an act a few times we almost form a habit, and come to do a thing as a matter of course, which was done at first only with much effort and with much resistance. And this property of our nature should teach us that in obliterating serious impressions we make it more difficult than ever that they should be re-formed. If we have attempted to crush conviction of sin, if we have offered successful resistance to the Spirit of God, it will be easier for us to offer such resistance again, so that unless the strivings of the Spirit be more intense than before they will not produce the same effect. And then comes the fearful question, will the strivings of the Spirit be more intense than before ? It is on this very point that God represents himself as putting the question of the text to Ephraim and Judah. Doubtless, his Spirit might have striven more mightily with those Jewish tribes. He had not reached a point at which it was absolutely impossible to proceed further, but he had reached a point at which to increase that power or agency would be to interfere with that liberty of human action which is indispensable to human accountability, and at which, therefore, all further exercise of power must be limited. On his own decision of this question hung the fate of Ephraim and Judah. If he could not strive more intensely with them they must perish ; for having hitherto resisted the strivings of the Spirit, they might manifest a desire to resist further, and thus they would sin with greater facility, and if he did strive yet more with them, it would by no means follow that he would bind them to his service. Increased striving would have only increased the power of resistance, and still their goodness would have been only as the morning cloud and the early dew.

It is the case with ourselves. And what to a minister is a greater cause of anxiety than the case of those who relapse into indifference after having once been aroused to give heed to religion ? If there be one of you who has been startled by sermons into serious anxiety and concern for his soul, but who has overcome its force, and is now again living a careless if not a dissolute life, we will tell that man why our apprehension on his account is even greater than that on account of one who never yet cried for help. We

can be sure in respect of such an one, that the influence of God's Spirit has been brought to bear on him in no small measure, as there has been such a rousing of conscience in view of eternity as almost to constrain him to lead a new life. Such a man, evidently, has not been let alone by God. No, sometimes his breast has been the scene of a mighty conflict between nature and grace, on which for a time the issue is seen on the side of grace, but he allowed nature, after a desperate struggle, to regain the ascendancy; and now, what is to be done for him? He is better able to resist than he was before, for his disastrous victory must have made him less amenable to rebuke and to exhortation. Unless, therefore, the Spirit strive with him more powerfully than before, his cause is worse than ever. And I do not know that the Spirit will strive more intensely than before. There is a point which the Spirit cannot pass without destroying man's free agency, and, for anything we can tell, this point has been already reached. Therefore we look on the backslider—or the man who has succeeded in smothering his convictions, as one in a position of imminent peril. He has been attentive to religion and then grown indifferent. His conscience has been awakened and then thrown again into torpor. He has renounced the world and then returned to it. He has entered God's service and then forsaken it. Ah, there is a fearful probability that the extreme point may have been reached up to which God's Spirit can ever carry his striving—a point in which, therefore, the Omnipotent himself may be expected to use the language as of one who had nothing more in his power. "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee!"

I must pray you to observe a peculiarity in these words which is very touching and affecting. God addresses himself to the very parties themselves whose goodness has vanished as the morning cloud or early dew. He proposes what we may call his difficulty, in the shape of questions, as though willing to be directed by those with whom he had striven in vain. If they would indeed point out what more could be done in their behalf, he refers it to their own decision. He makes them judges in the matter. Let them tell him wherein his dealings have been defective, and what other measures they wish him to take. Have ye nothing to say who have resisted the Spirit and succeeded in pacifying an alarmed conscience? What shall God do unto you? He asks you the question himself; he leaves it with you to prescribe. What shall he do unto you to lead you to repentance—to the forsaking of evil ways, and to the taking refuge beneath the cross of his Son? Shall he redouble his efforts, bringing to bear on you more powerful engines, so that you shall be forced away from the world and compelled to work out your salvation? Is this what you propose? Nay, hardly think it. You are not prepared to act thus. This would imply a readiness and a desire to forsake sin and cleave to holiness, whereas, it is the very want of this that is the saddest feature in your case. Well, then, shall he accumulate trouble upon trouble? Shall he take away your wife, your kinsman—shall they be mown down rapidly, one after another, till you stand alone on earth, and have nothing to turn to but God, who giveth songs in the night? You will not ask this. Nature protests against the prayer. You will not propose that God should slay those whom you love, albeit that the being afflicted might produce in you religion. How then? Shall he suffer you to continue to go on unpunished for your sins, provided only that sufficient space remain

before death, and that sufficient grace be imparted to you for repentance and remission of sins? Ah, you would perhaps ask this if you dared. This probably expresses most nearly your feelings, but you dare not propose it. You know that it would be only mocking God to pray for his permission to break his laws with impunity, and you know further, that whatever his difficulties in dealing with you now may be, there would be only greater at some distant time. What then have you to answer to God, to the question—"O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?" God puts it to your determination, and you, it seems, are found speechless. We will not say that your case is beyond hope, but we will derive a warning from the manifested peril in which you stand. I wish that those in whom serious thoughts had been excited, but who are still inclined to procrastinate, waiting, like Felix, for a more convenient season, and who are therefore in danger of bringing themselves into your present position—young persons especially, you who are in the prime of your days, who have been brought to ask—"What must we do to be saved?" would take good heed. Thus it is that we beseech of you most earnestly and affectionately, take ye good heed how ye trifle with your convictions. Ye cannot tell that ye shall ever again be blessed with those visitations of God's Spirit which have now wrought in you anxiety for the soul and desire for its safety. Your eternity is perhaps dependant on your present stedfastness. If ye will act, without delay, on the feelings that have been stirred, and are working within you, ye shall receive more grace—"For to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." Duties will become privileges, and ye shall find a peace which passeth all understanding in an assured hope of pardon through the sacrifice of Christ.

But if ye crush those feelings, there is a fearful likelihood of your passing from one degree of moral hardness to another, until God himself shall not know what to do for your conversion. Your goodness is now as a cloud on the face of the morning, or as the dew on the green herb. If you continue exposing yourselves to the fires of temptation; if in spite of the warnings of God's Spirit and the remonstrances of conscience—warnings and remonstrances which you may withstand if you will, yea, which you may overcome if you will—you frequent scenes and associations which are hostile to piety, alas! alas! there is nothing to be looked for but that the cloud shall disperse, and the dew exhale, and your soul shall be parched without a spiritual shower. But if on the other hand, ye seek by prayer and perseverance to keep yourselves beneath the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the cloud, in place of being dispersed, shall but gently join itself to that great cloud of witnesses which daily gathers more and more in the spiritual firmament, and the dew, in place of being exhaled, shall turn into those radiant gems which shall sparkle here to the glory of the ever-living God, and shall shine hereafter, never to be dimmed, in the immortal diadem of your Saviour.

Sketches and Essays.

HOME THE TRUE SPHERE OF WOMAN.*

"A woman's noblest station is retreat."

THOUGH the sphere of man is varied; and the Church, the Senate, the Court, the Bar, the Army, the Navy, may offer to him a wide field for the exercise of his powers, yet the province of woman may be told in one word—a word of true English birth and English growth, a word peculiarly English, and which expresses in heart-language our most cherished feelings—the precious, precious word HOME. And when we remember that this little word includes the dearest charities of life, the feelings entwined most closely and most abidingly round our hearts, surely in assigning home as a woman's proper and peculiar station, we are placing her in no ignoble office, we are pointing out to her no mean and uninteresting duties. We limit her energies and powers within a circle, but it is a circle of gold. The adaptation of the faculties and constitution of woman to her home-sphere and her home-duties may be considered a beautiful instance of the wisdom and goodness of God, as displayed in the creation. It is her part to soothe, to solace, and to sympathise; and those who would elevate her above her real station, would, in so doing, destroy the beauty of her character, as well as the usefulness of her position, for there is a beauty in appropriateness, a gracefulness in consistency.

The glimpses which the Scriptures afford us of domestic life, are in accordance with the views just taken of the true place of the female sex. The first family into whose domestic privacy we are admitted is that of Abraham; and from Sarah, down to Mary and Martha, the beloved friends of our Lord, we find the holy women of Scripture domestic women. And if there are, or seem to be any exceptions, it will be admitted; as in the case of Deborah, that they are exceptions. One of the most finished descriptions, perhaps we might say the most finished de-

* From "Every-day Duties." By Mr. Stodart.

scription of female excellence extant, is to be found in the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs, and you will acknowledge that it is strictly a domestic picture. There is not a trait which is not in keeping with this character. And if we turn from the Old Testament to the New, we shall find St. Paul enumerating the government of the house as one of the special duties of women, (1 Timothy v. 14.) and a domestic disposition (Titus ii. 5.) as one of the highest ornaments. Those who sneer at good housewifery, must, before they indulge their satirical vein, be pleased to examine particularly and carefully the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus; while such as acknowledge reason, fact, and above all the authority of Scripture, will not require many arguments on a point so clear. The testimony of Scripture is, indeed, explicit; for on this, as on other subjects, we would not establish our proposition so much from insulated texts as from the general tenor and bearing of the Word of God. Quietness, humility, gentleness, submission, are the qualities peculiarly set forth for the softer and the humbler sex; qualities, without which, whatever else a woman may boast, she cannot be considered as amiable, or as qualified for her peculiar duties. Her place is subordinate, but this is not to be understood as meaning that her real privileges are fewer, or that the end of her existence is less exalted. No; "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." Her duties are to be performed to her Saviour, for the sake of her Saviour; and whatever the work is that he may appoint, it is still His work, and is to be performed not unto man, but unto God. You have probably heard John Newton's saying, that if God sent two angels from heaven to earth, one with a commission to rule a mighty empire, the other to sweep the streets, the scavenger would take his place as cheerfully as the monarch. And so let it be with us: it is not for us to quarrel with the dispensations of Providence, to "kick against the pricks;" we must do our own work in our own sphere with the full conviction that it is the path of usefulness. We cannot doubt but that many a retired female in the privacy of domestic life, is "serving her own generation according to the will of God"—the end for which each human being is sent into the world. Ambition often defeats its own ends: there is folly in pride, supreme folly in aiming to occupy stations for which we are not fitted, and to take upon us duties which we are unqualified to discharge. This is one and a most important practical evil of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; and besides the failure in our proud aspirations, our own duties—duties, in the discharge of which we might have been

useful and respectable, are left unperformed. If in the education of children, it is important to ascertain the peculiar bent of their minds, so as to train them for that pursuit in which they seem best qualified to excel; so when the point is really ascertained as to the proper sphere for the exercise of the peculiar powers of any individual, it is of importance to restrict the powers to that sphere. A planet, which moves regularly and usefully in its proper orbit, would, if the laws which regulate its movements were suddenly suspended, introduce disorder and confusion throughout the system of which it is a constituent part. There have been "wandering stars" in the female world; but never imagine for one moment, that any brilliancy of splendour can atone for intentional eccentricity of course. The steady lustre of a planet is a more abiding as well as a more salutary light than the fitful blaze of the rapid and mysterious comet.

There was much of truth and good sense in the advice Pericles gave to the Athenian women to consider it their praise not to be spoken of in any way. And truly in these days of rambling out-of-door Christianity, when even "women professing godliness," are seen "wandering about from house to house," "learning to be idle," sometimes (it may seem severe,) under the plea of Christian exertion, it will be well for us to be recalled to our own posts, and to be reminded of our own duties, even by the voice of a heathen. We cannot hesitate stating it as our opinion that the truth, that home is a woman's peculiar post seems in danger of being overlooked. We see and hear of ladies at public meetings, on committees, &c., &c., so frequently, so constantly, that we are reminded of Napoleon's abrupt inquiry of Madame de Staël, whether amid her varied acquirements she had found time to attend to her family duties. But setting the inquiry respecting the discharge of family duties aside, as a point on which we have no right to judge, we are still inclined to think that a little less publicity, a little more "keeping at home" might be more in consistency with the tone of female character and more conducive to individual usefulness. There is a delicacy in the female character which renders it peculiarly liable to injury, and injury not easily repaired. It is not difficult to strike the plumes from the butterfly's wing, or to remove the bloom from the luscious plum, but what human hand can replace the lost beauties? Something may be added, but nothing can give again the charm that is lost. We would not use the word *purity* in speaking of a fallen and polluted being, but we may say that the first fragrant bloom, the gentleness, the simplicity, the modesty,

the adaptation to, and enjoyment of home pleasures and home employments should be guarded with the most sedulous care and the most jealous eye, just as we watch over a tender plant in stormy and wintry weather. We screen such a plant from biting winds, as well as guard it from nipping frosts. Women also require to be *housed*—and to apply a passage from a noble poet, we may say even of her highest accomplishments and graces—

“ In shade let them rest like a delicate flower,
Or breathe on them gently—they die in an hour.”

We have perhaps spoken more fully of this from the conviction previously hinted at, that in the stir, and ferment, and bustle of these busy times, woman is too apt to imbibe the spirit of the age, and to stand forward in departments for which she was never designed, and for which she is altogether unfitted. Woman is, and ever must be, to use the beautiful language of Jeremy Taylor, and to apply it in its highest and most emphatical sense, “an under-worker in the house of the Lord, her labour is in the foundations,” and no sophistry, no false pretensions can change so stubborn a thing as fact.

We are inclined to think that the female student of political economy might do well and wisely to confine herself to domestic economy; and it is not perhaps too much to say, that it is more honourable to a woman to have written Mrs. Rundall's *Domestic Cookery*, than Miss Martineau's *Political Tales*, inasmuch as one is in the province of a female and the other is not. The female politician (there is an anomaly in the sound,) may surprise us by the variety of her knowledge and the apparent cleverness of her arguments, but we feel in the midst of her most laboured dissertations, that something is there which ought not to be, and that something is wanting which “the heart looks for in woman.” And to turn to what is called the religious world, the female preacher may be very clear in her doctrinal statement, and very cogent in her practical applications, and yet, while we may acknowledge her power or her eloquence, we cannot, and we would not banish from our memory the words of the great Apostle—“Let a woman learn in silence with all subjection. I suffer not a woman to teach, but to be in silence.” We do not seek to prevent the usefulness of woman, by wishing to limit her exertions within the sphere which is pointed out to her, not merely by the regulations of human society, but by the laws of God: on the contrary, we deem that she will work more efficiently when working in her own circle, and that she will walk with a firmer step and a surer and safer

footing within that circle's bounds. She is naturally exposed to many dangers, it is unwise to tempt more by needlessly exposing herself to extra darts. If, in so doing she should be wounded, we may pity, but our pity must be mingled with some feeling approaching to blame.

The link between home and women is so maternal, so congenial to our English tastes, as well as to our English feelings, that it seems to be an unnecessary expenditure of time to endeavour to prove the connexion. It might fairly be called one of those first principles which are received without proof: but still, as even first principles are sometimes attacked, I trust you will not consider this full explanation altogether useless.

FAMILY DUTIES.*

A WORD FOR PARENTS.

THE first remark which occurs to us as proper to be considered, is that in the case especially of very young members of the household, the Sabbath cannot be felt by children, as by their toiling parents, to be a welcome day for its physical rest, and pause of secular cares. This aspect of the boon of the Sabbath connects itself chiefly with riper years. But two things may be said, in relation to the children, even on this point. The day should not, on the contrary, be made unwelcome to them as a day of toil. There should be an intermission of all tasks for school, however befitting the sacredness of the day, that could properly come under the head of labour. There should be no task-work, deserving the name, assigned at home. We do not mean that there should be no sacred lesson calling for mental application, but it should be such as may be felt rather as a pleasant recreation than a burdensome imposition. For the day of the Lord is a day for gladness, and rest, and solace. We think that even the Jewish Sabbath was no day of severe restriction and servile gloom—the prohibition of kindling fires and performing slave work argues anything but a spirit of morose exaction as belonging to the institution; and assuredly of the Lord's-day we may sing, "This is the day which Jehovah hath made; we will be glad and rejoice in it." Everything, then, should be done to impress on the minds of children the feeling,

* From an excellent little work, "The Children's Charter." By the Rev. J. Edmond, Glasgow.

that the Christian Sabbath is a weekly festival of sacred joy. Again, though children, especially while they are very young, cannot appreciate mere rest for themselves, they should be made to enjoy the rest of others. They should feel that, as the Sabbath comes round, a day of domestic sunshine comes for them in the uninterrupted company and converse of their parents, which the benignant interval of secular toil permits. This is a day for the free, fond play of domestic affections—for the opening of the sluices of all kindly emotions—for the unrestrained communion of heart with heart. Twin with joy let love this day preside.

Then, in the exercises suited to the day, and designed for spiritual profit, let there be a good deal of variety—variety on different Sabbaths, as compared with each other, and in the course of every Sabbath itself. The young mind loves change, and a little ingenuity is wisely expended to gratify it here. For example, a little while may be occupied with getting some account, or giving it, of the services in church; one of the young people may for a time read aloud for the benefit of all; some hymns may be repeated and sung; some picture of a Scripture incident may be examined and explained; a little interval may be allowed, in which there is nothing but conversation, or each member of the family is left to choose his own avocations; or some text may be taken and illustrated by turning up parallel passages; or the little ones may be taken apart, and talked and prayed with severally; but, in whatever way, let every effort be made to make the Sabbath hours appear the most attractive of the week—lightsome without levity, improving without toil, joyous without mirth.

There are two things which we think should be largely employed in Sabbath home enjoyments for the young—pictures and music. We have already alluded to them, but they deserve a more special notice. Happily pictorial representations of Scripture incidents, missionary scenes, and other objects fitted to impress some salutary lesson or interesting fact on the memory and heart, are easily to be obtained in varied abundance. For the youngest members of the household, that have passed the stage of merest infancy, these can be made the most effectively available. The little students should be taught, however, to examine and understand them, not merely to cast a glance at one, and then turn to another. And the examination should be turned to use in the way of informing the mind or impressing the heart. Happily, also, we have melodies for the young, excellent, numerous, and varied. Let them be largely used

in the home Sabbath school. Nor will some of David's old psalms—the twenty-third, for instance, and the hundred and thirty-third—be easily supplanted by anything better. If the children can be trained to sing their songs in parts, so much the more delightful will be the exercise. A beautiful thing is the fireside choir, with concord of beating hearts underneath the harmony of voices.

In the religious instruction of the household, the great text-book must, of course, be the Bible. The things it contains are those by which, by its own authority, we are enjoined to teach our children diligently—"talking of them when we sit in the house and walk by the way, when we lie down and when we rise up." And what endless sources of the most pleasing instruction for the young are to be found in the wonderful histories, sublime doctrines, and glorious prophecies of the book of God! From the old paradise to the new, what walks there are to lead them through!—from the panorama of creation-work, in the Mosaic record, to the vision of the new Jerusalem, what sights to see!—from the word, "Let there be light," to the sound of the last trump, what voices to be heard! Let any parent try how soon and powerfully a child can be made to feel the charm of the grand old stories of Scripture simply related—let him read them from the singularly successful versions of the "Peep of Day" and "Line upon Line," and he will feel how rich he is in materials for teaching his youthful charge, in the possession of his Bible. There is nothing comparable to it for perennially interesting the young. If there be any book worthy of being associated with it, it is Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," of which not the least wonderful excellence is its power to fascinate the heart of a child, while fitted to instruct the mind of a Christian sage.

But, withal, we must not neglect in our families the good old practice of catechising. Nor is the Shorter Catechism, time-honoured in our Scottish fathers' homes, to be displaced. If children, after all, are to be prepared for understanding the instructions of the pulpit, and withstanding the influence of frothy speculations in this fermenting time, they must be systematically instructed in the great truths of the Christian faith. And there is not, on the whole, a better text-book than the Catechism of the Westminster Divines, already referred to. It is not, of course, recommended as a first book for little learners; but, at a more advanced stage, it will be found of great advantage to lodge its singularly rich and wise summary of religious doctrine in the minds of the young, in its own words. Though these were committed simply to me-

mory by parrot rote, the result would not be without its advantage, in familiarising them with a terminology which, it is to be hoped, will not soon, even yet, be banished from our pulpits. But the Catechism is not so hard or unintelligible a text-book as has sometimes been thought; while its comprehensiveness, accuracy, and clearness, are worthy of all praise. The repetition of a section of the Shorter Catechism, with extemporised questions, tending to expand and illustrate its concise statements, would be found a very profitable part of the varied exercises of the home school. There are many valuable helps for such a service, and easily attainable; of which Matthew Henry's Scriptural Catechism is not the least interesting and valuable.

EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY HALLELUJAHS.*

"And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."

A SINGLE beam of light becomes a star on the bosom of a thousand drops of the morning. The song of one is followed by the chorus of many. The rejoicing of Bartimeus has made the highway to Jerusalem like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness are found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Just now it was like the valley of Baca, that is, the Vale of Tears or Lamentation; but it has become a well—a fountain of universal joy. When God brought David out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set his foot upon a rock, and established his goings, then he put a new song into his mouth, even praise unto our God. And what then? Did the blessed work stand alone? Nay, many saw, and feared, and trusted in the Lord.

In what mournful contrast was David's experience in that saddest year of his life—the year of unconfessed guilt and a stupid conscience! He no more drew water with joy out of the wells of salvation. Day and night God's hand was heavy upon him, and his moisture was turned into the drought of summer. Rust gathered on his harp-strings, and the palace no more resounded with his morning and evening song.

And what was the result? It was then as now. The guilty Christian

* Blind Bartimeus and his Great Physician. By Professor Hoge. Edinburgh: Strahan & Co.

is the dumb Christian, and the dumb Christian is useless. Guilt paralysed his tongue and sealed his lips. He could not teach transgressors the ways of God, and sinners were no more converted by his instrumentality.

At length the voice of God broke the dismal silence. By his prophet and his providence, he both rebuked and chastened him, until he came bending and weeping to the altar, and laid on it his broken spirit—that ever acceptable sacrifice, yea, all sacrifices is one. In the fifty-first Psalm you may read his confession; and in the thirty-second, the history of the whole matter—the guilty silence, the sore chastening, the ingenious acknowledgment, the free pardon, and the overflowing thankfulness, confidence, and joy. Nor does he fail to express his assurance that the result shall follow—that, because of his forgiveness and blessedness, so obtained, every one that is godly shall be encouraged to pray.

Ebenezer! Hitherto the Lord hath helped us. Let gracious souls, who have fallen and been lifted up, who have sinned and found pardon, who have wrestled hard and overcome, be led to solemn and timely declarations of their Redeemer's grace. It is at once a debt of love and a deed of mercy.

"Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing shall take heart again."

Blessed Paul says he was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious; but his Lord's grace was abundant; and "it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," of whom Paul felt himself to be the chief. Howbeit for this cause he obtained mercy, that in him first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, *for a pattern* to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.

This is one great end of a public profession of religion. We confess Christ that we may commend him. The Church is a golden candlestick, which Christ has set on high to give light to a dark world. When a new light is kindled, how shall it not covet to be set there too? Christ has commanded it, and can we refuse? He means it—for beauty and for order; for our honour and defence; for a guide to the lost, an encouragement to the fearful, a testimony and rebuke to the carnal; for the comfort of the faithful; and for his own glory.

Yet let us not exalt our grateful telling above his gracious working.

If the multitude had not seen what Jesus did, little would they have minded what Bartimeus said. Their song began quicker and rose higher for his joyful note; still, it was of the miracle they sung. They waited only for proof that he actually saw, and when his rapturous outburst gave *that*, their hearts flowed over. And so our professions are nothing, except as displays of Christ's work. Their virtue is their verity—their *transparency*, suffering the grace and power of God to shine through them. They bring glory to God, as they are clear instances, and so proofs, of his Almighty, healing love.

How profoundly interesting and suggestive is this whole scene! Jesus has just wrought a work in which he has destroyed one of the works of the devil, redeemed a wretched man from his captivity and torment, and thereby brought glory to the Father; and now we behold him serenely walking at the head of a vast multitude, who fill the air with acclamations at the gracious deed.

It is an epitome of his work on earth, and a foreshowing of his reward in heaven.

He came down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. This was his meat,—that without which he could not live. He sought not his own glory. His incarnation was for three great ends—the destruction of the devil and his works; the salvation of the lost; and the manifestation of the Father. But the last was the great end, to which both of the others were subordinate. His whole life, his whole death, breathed out this prayer, Father, glorify thy name! He himself announces this as the sum of all he had done on earth. It was on the night of his betrayal, but a few days after this triumphal march from Jericho, but a few hours before his death. Then the thirty-three years of his life on earth passed in solemn review before him. They were indeed covered with obloquy and ignominy, but they presented nothing for regret. No repentance mingled with the contemplation, but rather calm, deep, sublime satisfaction. Surrounded by chosen witnesses of his work and representatives of his church, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and exclaimed, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. It was for this he laboured, for this he suffered, for this he saved, for this he destroyed. Zeal for his Father's glory absorbed him, consumed him, and yet sustained him. And it was only when this end was accomplished, as far as was possible in his estate of humiliation, that he thought of his own glory, and prayed to be restored to it—his essential, eternal, incom-

municable glory, that which he veiled so deeply when he undertook his lowly errand. And *now*, O Father, he prays, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was! Oh, what a life was his! a whole consecration, all worship, all praise, one golden censer full of divinest incense, ever burning and sending forth its fragrant clouds to heaven.

Finally, from this highway to Jerusalem and the hallelujahs of its festal multitudes, our thoughts are borne forward and upward.

“There all the heavenly hosts are seen,
In shining ranks they move!”

Bartimeus is there. Yea, every one of all that countless throng was once a poor Bartimeus—blind, wretched, ruined, the helpless captive of Satan, marred and accursed—until Jesus passed by to pity and to heal. And so each one in his turn the subject of the song and joy of all the rest.

The multitude is there. Now there is no chiding nor strife among them. They are without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. They “shine in the light of God,” and have been made perfect in love. They are all clothed in bright raiment of holiness and righteousness, and can look full upon the sunshine of the throne. They wear crowns upon their heads, and have harps and palms in their hands. This is the sacramental host of God’s elect, the general assembly and church of the first-born. An innumerable company of angels is also with them, rejoicing in their joy, helping them praise.

And Jesus is there. What would all this be without him? Nay, without him, none of this could be. The music would hush and the light go out. The crown would fall from the head, and the gold become dim? Silence, coldness, and death would cover the heavenly plains. But there he is, walking at the head of all the glorious company. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and redeemed them at an infinite cost, and now he sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied. It is finished! He presents them before his Father: “Behold I and the children which God hath given me!”

“O long expected day begin!”

ISRAEL'S SIN AND MESSIAH'S LOVE.*

(Matthew xxiii. 35, 36.)

THREE times in the one verse does Christ mention blood, and now, from that point of view in which God regards the whole human race, lays to the account of this Jerusalem and Israel all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, just as his Spirit again does to the future Babylon (Rev. xviii. 24). The first righteous person upon earth murdered through hatred of God and fraternal hatred is Abel; of his murder also is Israel guilty, for they have done worse to Christ than Cain did to his brother.

The great collective guilt of all the blood shed on the earth, as it is represented and shadowed forth in the history of the Holy Scripture from Abel to Zacharias, will break forth in vengeance upon this generation in a collective punishment, as well typical as real; this evil and adulterous generation, which speaks as at verse 30, and acts as at verse 34. Therefore the measure of sin against the long-suffering of God is full to overflowing. That is, indeed, first of all the last generation of this people, the wicked and adulterous generation, which is possessed by the return of seven worse devils along with the first, which, in its sins, repeats and sums up all that went before; yet, in so far as the fathers are represented as only meeting their full punishment in their children, "this generation" here includes at the same time the entire people, of whom it is said (verse 35), "Ye have slain."

It may be asked, finally, Does not the blood also of the crucified Son of God, in and with all the others, come upon this generation? If this question means, Wherefore does Christ not expressly or chiefly specify this here? the first answer is easy, for even as regards outward propriety it would be highly unsuitable openly to say such a thing at this farewell. For this would be more than the word of Zacharias: "The Lord will see and seek it." But the reason lies still deeper: partly in the Saviour's feeling of love and compassion, which makes it impossible for him to express this threatening of vengeance; partly in the truth corresponding to this feeling, that in fact the blood of Christ, although his crucifiers call it down upon their heads, yet even to the last judgment of the world continues to speak better things than the blood of Abel—viz, grace, and not vengeance; so that, in the restored Israel at last, this

* From the third volume of Stier's admirable work, "The Love of Jesus."

blood-guiltiness is yet cleansed away (Joel iii. 21), and the vengeance, on account of the rejected blood of reconciliation, extends to quite another sphere, belongs to quite another judgment, than that which is first of all historically represented in Israel.

Did Christ himself say (verse 37), Behold here a greater than Jonas? then may also his interpreter say to the generation of this time, Behold here is something incomparably greater than, and different from, aught that has ever been uttered in accents breaking from the heart, and penetrating to the heart, in poems or histories. "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" Thus exclaims the Messiah, the God and Lord, and Saviour of Israel in the flesh, who sent all the prophets, who is himself come, and will again send apostles, who will soon, by the hands of his enemies, hang upon the cross—by His own and the Father's Divine power will rise from the opened grave, and sit upon the throne of heaven—thus calls Jesus over the sinners who will not have him and his grace, but their sin and their judgment. What a tone and sound for the hearers must this word have had when it came from the mouth of Christ! the already filled up measure of all Divine grace and Saviour-love, in opposition to the measure of sin, now soon to be filled up by the children who, centuries long, had been nourished and brought up in vain—that first call of the Creator, "Adam, where art thou? whither wilt thou?" breaking forth inconceivably intensified from the heart of the Son of Man moved with human passion—the most perfect unity of alluring love and judging wrath in this doubly complaining, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" Hear, ye heavens, and give ear, O earth, for—the Lord speaks! And are we to take away these words from this place in his farewell, which alone is their proper place? are we to believe here that the Evangelist has presumed to elaborate and improve the Divine drama? Rather would we believe that Christ had already uttered three times—ten times before (which would not at all be so wrong)—this word he now utters for the last time with most striking emphasis.

The word, as a whole, is a prolepsis of the decisive judgment, stretching beyond the preaching of the apostles, the rejection of which Christ already knew beforehand: the Jerusalem he means in the entire people, those also of past times viewed in the centre. Verses 33 and 35 are now partly connected together, as also already verse 36; therefore the apostles, as opposed to the former prophets, are the new messengers who shall yet invite the guests to the marriage in vain, the first of whom was at once stoned, (Acts vii.) as Moses commanded that the *false* prophets

should be stoned. Between prophets and apostles, then comes the exalted *I* of the Incarnate Lord, who is at the same time, above prophets and apostles; for this Lord it is who has always sent, and now sends, and who himself also came and called in all his messengers. The *I* of Christ embraces at the same time all the past, as verse 34 the future. "He never forgets his part,"—to speak foolishly for the sake of fools; he can never at any time deny who he is; and even when he appears most human, the consciousness of his eternal Divine dignity shines through with all the more immediate reality. "Thy children"—that is, at the same time, all the people of this sacred metropolis scattered in the country or over the earth. It would be a very false narrowing of the discourse as a whole to explain the words "How often" of Christ's frequent visits to the metropolis at the festivals; it speaks in a higher and more comprehensive style. "How often"—this includes, at the same time, all the calls of the former prophets, with all the invitations of those afterwards sent, known beforehand to be in vain, although it places the calls and invitations of Christ himself in the centre. Christ would ever, from time to time, have gathered them all as his people into his kingdom to his heart. But not by force; in this way no one is drawn into God's kingdom, to God's heart; even Israel's Messiah is only a Saviour who at last passively offers himself, who must leave it to the will of men to come, and must go away when they will not and do not come. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, and then beareth them herself on her wings, so did Jehovah at first, (Deut. xxxii. 11.) and afterwards ever more kindly and lovingly offer his sheltering wing to his people, in the word of the prophets, (Psalms xvii. 8, xxvi. 8, lvii. 2, lxi. 5; Isaiah xxxi. 5, 6; Malachi iv. 2.) until, with most familiar tenderness, Jesus, here speaking in the person of Jehovah, (which is to be observed, see especially Isaiah xxxi. 5.) would spread his wings over them as a hen over her chickens, ere the birds of prey, as other eagles of judgment, come. The wings are still spread even for the murderers of the prophets, while Christ now speaks; even for the stoners of Stephen, as was shown in the case of Paul, he will still spread them out; but what he himself has experienced will be the result upon the whole—that, namely, which he expresses in the words "Ye would not." (Isaiah xxviii. 12, xxx. 15, and many places in the prophets.) The grace that still remains will indeed gather others in their place who *will*, but they who *would not* what Christ would, fall into the condemnation. 'The power of the Almighty appears as impotence before the obstinacy

of the creature, and has only tears (Luke xix. 41) wherewith to overcome them.' Whose *heart* dares here to answer, with the system of the *head*, "Thy willing and drawing was not in right earnest, thy lamentation but a mockery and a sport, for thine irresistible grace was not there to give them the power to will?"

A FEW FACTS FOR MOTHERS.

MANY years ago, a good woman was dying. Her children were young, but, excepting the youngest, old enough to remember her appearance and words. The home and circumstances she was leaving were very inviting, and yet they did not win her affections from the rest for which she was longing. One of her greatest anxieties, for months previous to her death, was the future welfare of her children; and this often induced in her a spirit of prayer so fervent, that she seemed in "an agony of prayer."

Before she died, this anxious state of mind gave place to one which may be described as a full assurance that her children would all be saved. With this assurance her mind became serene and happy, in the full prospect of leaving those she loved for "the bourne whence no traveller returns." To her husband and Christian friends she said, "I have not a doubt but my children will be saved."

In a few days she "fell asleep;" and the years were passing away without her faith being realised. The father was full of anxious forebodings for his children, and was faithful to them; yet for a long time not one of them showed signs of being savingly benefited. They were in possession of all but "the one thing needful." "The foundation of God standeth sure, leaving this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his." The time had come for the mother's prayers to receive an answer in part. One son was sent to a school which that year was surrounded and penetrated with revival influences. The lad's heart was touched; he confessed himself a sinner, and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. I remember to have seen the letter in which he communicated to his father the intelligence. Self-distrustful, yet he leant on the Saviour; scarcely daring to be comforted, yet evidently he felt a happiness of heart to which he had hitherto been a stranger. Forthwith he began to bear his cross, taking part in the prayer-meeting, conversing with and writing to his impenitent friends, and in various ways seeking to promote the

Redeemer's kingdom. He was not free from infirmities, but he was a lovely example of the Christian life.

This interesting incident prepared the way for the subsequent conversion of a sister, who became one of the most gentle and beautiful Christians I have ever known. She has since passed away, having strong faith that her offspring also shall meet her in "the better land."

The first of the family converted was the first to meet his mother. He was summoned suddenly, but no one doubted his readiness to depart. His death was made a means of life to the remainder of the family for whom the mother had prayed, so that long after she died her prayer was fully answered.

I once heard the grateful exclamations of a venerable minister over the conversion of a son who had been a grief to him. "The mother, long in heaven, had woven cords about his heart from which he had never been able to escape!"

Recently, at a prayer-meeting, the following instance was related:—A man was converted who had adopted infidel opinions under the teachings of his father. The convert had previously been an active opposer of religion. At an evening prayer-meeting a brother suggested that conversions are given in answer to prayer, and that wicked men, who seem abandoned, are sometimes converted in answer to the prayer of parents who have long been dead. Our convert lost his mother when he was too young to remember her, but now it occurred to him that she might have something to do with his conversion. He rode out to his father's house to ask about the matter. The old man derided his son for being such a fool in religion, but at last told him that not only was his mother a pious woman, but that her last hours were occupied with prayers for her child, and in charging her husband to bring up their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!

And there was revealed the hidden cause of an effect which filled the town with wonder. The infidel was converted in answer to the prayers which his mother had breathed in his behalf, when he was an infant too young to remember either her or her prayers. I may add, that the old father was also converted soon afterwards.

Some years ago, a class of young men in a Theological Seminary spent several nights in "experience meetings." Each one related so much of his past history as he chose, stating the character and influence of his parents, pastor, the church, the time and manner of his conversion. The singular fact was found out, that, with one exception, all these young men had pious mothers.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

FALSE TEACHERS.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SEPTEMBER 25, 1859,

BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL B.D.

(Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty, and Canon Residentary of St. Paul's.)

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON.

"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, where there is no peace."—Jeremiah vi. 14.

How mischievous is that false kindness which is afraid of telling you honestly the state of the case, if it happen to be dangerous or desperate! The Jews were now in a condition of great peril, threatened with captivity and exile on account of their frequent rebellions; but they could not tolerate the faithful counsellors who told them of their vices, and warned them of their danger. The only way to their favour, and consequently to power and emolument, was to flatter them with the assurance that no calamity was at hand, and that there was no pressing need for repentance; and though the armies of the King of Babylon were almost thundering at their gates, they were so bent on being deceived, that they treated with contempt the prophets of the Lord, and bestowed all their attention and applause on those who were ready to promise them security. Thus, having made it for the interest of false teachers to soothe and deceive, they were assiduously addressed by plausible and flattering men, for as soon as the popular determination is sufficiently marked, there will always be numbers to court in the indicated way the popular favour. Given up at last to their own delusions, and vices, they did but flatter themselves on a personal exemption and freedom from trouble, so that trouble closed in upon them, and it was not until their city was beset, and the strength and glory of their kingdom was borne to a strange land, that they awoke to a consciousness, that the worst wound of all was a wound slightly healed; and the worst enemy of all one who prophesies of peace, when, if God's word be true, there is no peace whatsoever.

Now, we wish you to be aware of the fact, that in regard of their eternal concerns, men have a willingness and feel a desire to be deceived, though in regard of their temporal concerns, they are keenly alive to attempts at imposition, and eager to resent them. They commonly prefer the moral physician who will make light of their vices, and not startle them by faithfully

Mother's Magazine, November, 1859.

exposing their danger, though, were they similarly beguiled and deceived by one whom they consulted on a bodily malady, they would denounce him as guilty of the most hateful perfidy. And it may be for your profit, if we look into some of the more ordinary cases in which "the hurt of the daughter of God's people may be slightly healed, and peace spoken of where there is no peace."

And, first, we would remind you that, if there be truth in the statements of Scripture, there is a distinction the very strongest between the people of the world and the people of God. If you will take the Bible as a sufficient authority, no two communities could be more broadly separated—actuated by motives more widely different, or engaged in pursuing objects that have less of alliance. When it is expressly affirmed, that "if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature;" "old things having passed away, and all things having become new"—when it is declared that the friendship of the world is enmity with God; and that, consequently, if any man will be a friend of the world, he is the enemy of God—you must allow that language could not more strongly express difference in character and deportment, nor more clearly mark that anything like amalgamation is made impossible by the nature of the case. Yet, here is the respect in which, perhaps, the danger is the greatest of the moral hurt being only slightly healed, and peace prophesied when there is no peace. It is just here that the teacher is most tempted to slur over truth, because just here it is that truth is most distasteful to all classes of hearers. The worldly are well pleased to have the differences between themselves and the religious made as few and unimportant as possible, inasmuch as they are thus soothed into a persuasion, that after all they are in no great danger of the wrath of the Almighty. On the other hand, those who profess a concern for the soul are often still so much inclined to the pursuits and the pleasures of earth, that they have a ready ear for any doctrine which seems to offer them the joys of the next life, without requiring continued self-denial in this life. Thus it is an unpopular thing, opposed to the inclinations of the majority of hearers, to insist upon the breadth of separation between the worldly and the religious, to represent, without qualification or disguise, that the attempting to serve two masters is the certain serving of only one, and that the master whose wages is death. But if we would, be faithful in the ministry, this is what we must do. To do otherwise, would be to play with your souls—to lead you into delusion, which, if continued, must leave you shipwrecked for eternity. There is no escaping, except through dishonesty and subterfuge. The repeated and explicit statements of Scripture as to the character of that moral change of which converted men are the subjects. It is not a change which simply produces abstinence from certain forms of wickedness and attention to certain outward duties. It is a change in the heart, such a renewing of the affections that men no longer delight in what before gave them pleasure, and no longer pursue what before seemed their chief good. Therefore it is a change which cannot have been experienced, if the man be as solicitous as ever to amass wealth, as eager as ever in schemes of self aggrandisement, as indulgent as ever to evil passions and evil tempers. The subject of this change will burn with a strong desire to bring up the whole world to that standard of religion which is given in God's word, but he will shrink, as from sacrilege and self-destruction, from any endeavour to lower that standard, so as to make

it square better with the maxims of fashionable life, and allow greater indulgence in earthly pursuits.

This is what we would preach to you, the necessary and insurmountable opposition between what is religious and what worldly, and the consequent impossibility of your being on God's side, and yet studying how much of friendship may be kept with all with which he would have you at war. But to insist on this doctrine is to probe a great mass of professing Christians to the quick, for they would fain believe that the soul may be saved without that abandonment of the world, that deep consecration of the powers and affections to the Almighty, which are required by what they count a too rigid theology. But it were a base betrayal of the trust committed to us by God, to represent it as possible that the heart may be given to the Creator, whilst time, and thought, and toil, and talent are engrossed by the creature. To speak favourably of a religion which finds a worldly atmosphere congenial, what were this but to praise the purity which is at home with pollution, or the life which breathes freest in the sepulchre. Therefore do we know and feel, that were we to say anything to encourage the opinion that men may be safe in being either fashionably religious or religiously fashionable, in being, that is, either just so religious as not to offend the world, or just so worldly as not to put contempt on religion—we should only be bringing on ourselves the condemnation and on you the consequences of that treacherous dealing which is denounced in our text—we should be healing the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly, we should be saying, "Peace, peace, when there was no peace."

Take another case, the case of those in whom has been produced a conviction of sin, whose consciences after a long slumber have been aroused to do their office and have done it with great energy. It is no uncommon thing for conviction of sin not to be followed by conversion. Hundreds who have been stirred for a time to a sense of guilt and danger, in place of advancing to genuine penitence have lapsed back into former indifference. Ah, this is amongst the most alarming of moral phenomena. The signs and earnest, as we thought of life, give a melancholy and mysterious interest to death. Let the ministers of religion take heed that they be not accessory to so disappointing an occurrence, and they easily may be. The spiritual physician may be too hasty in applying to the wounded conscience the balm of the gospel; and thus he may arrest that process of godly contrition which seemed so hopefully begun. He may pour in the consolations of Christianity and administer cordials provided for the broken in heart before there has been acquired that deep feeling of the need of a mediator which can only result from the abiding engrossing consciousness of helplessness and guilt. For it should ever be remembered that though the gospel has so taken the place of the law that we are no longer under the latter as a covenant, the law has not ceased to be an engine for arousing the conscience as well as a rule for regulating the life. The terrors of the law prepare the way for the mercies of the gospel, and it is the man who has been scared by the thunderings and the lightnings of Sinai who is ready to receive those breathings of love which flow forth from Zion, and we cannot doubt that when the terrors of the law are just beginning to do their part, producing their sense of exposure to God's wrath and of utter inability to avert it, it may be just possible that the mercies of the gospel may be prematurely introduced by the spiritual

minister. It is no time to speak of free forgiveness till the man exclaims in the agony of alarm and almost of despair—"What must I do to be saved?" Then display the cross. Then expatiate on the glorious truth, that "the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Then point to the unsearchable riches of Christ, and meet every doubt, oppose every objection, and combat every fear by exhibiting the mighty fact of an atonement for sin. You cannot now be building up, when you ought to be casting down, for the self-abasement is an evidence to show that the time has come in which, according to St. Paul, you should comfort the individual, lest, perhaps, he be swallowed up of over much sorrow. It will, indeed, be often difficult to determine whether there be that genuine contrition and that hearty feeling of want which prove that free pardon may be offered without danger of the blessing be abused. For we may as easily do wrong by delaying to say to the sinner—"Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," as by bidding him dismiss his fears before those fears have sufficiently agitated him, and overthrown carnal confidences. The wound may be kept open too long, so that unnecessary pain and weakness are occasioned just as it may be closed too soon, before we can expect a healthy granulation.

But the case suggested by our text is that of a too hasty appropriation of the consolations of Christianity, and this case we cannot doubt is of frequent occurrence. Not, indeed, that whenever conviction of sin is not followed by conversion, the cause is to be found in the premature use of the mercies of the gospel. We know too well that in many instances the conscience which had been mysteriously aroused is as mysteriously quieted; so that, without a solitary reason, men who had manifested anxiety as to their souls, and apparently been earnest in seeking salvation are soon again found amongst the careless and indifferent, as busy as ever with chasing shadows, as pleased as ever with things that perish in the using. For a moment they have seemed conscious of their immortality and have risen to the dignity of deathless beings, and then the pulse has ceased to beat, and they have again been creatures of a day in place of heirs of eternity. Still, if there be many instances in which we may not fairly ascribe to a too hasty appropriation of the mercies of the gospel, the failure of what seemed hopefully commenced, we may justly say that such an exhibition is likely to produce so disappointing a result, and that the probability is that it frequently does. Oh, is it not a possible thing? Is it not rather what we may believe often occurring that men suppose themselves pardoned before they have felt themselves lost, and that thus applying to their own cases the promises of the word ere they have learned the dangerous nature of the evil which suggests a remedy, they are brought into a worse insensibility than that from which they have emerged—the insensibility of a false hope, of a persuasion of safety with the ignorance of danger? Indeed, we do feel that were one of you to come to us labouring under spiritual distress, and seeking spiritual counsel, it would be fearfully easy to mistake his case, to address him in words of comfort, when we ought to be acting on his fears. In our eagerness to cheer the disquieted man and to magnify the Redeemer, we might encourage him at once to take as his own the pardon proffered to the penitent, though he may not yet have been brought to the thorough repentance, which is the condition on which the pardon is bestowed; and we should be hereby doing incalculable injury. We should be quieting anxieties aroused for the most

salutary purposes, and dissipating terrors which were working the downfall of pride. He may go from us with a mind more at ease, because informed from the scheme of redemption that no amount of guilt presents insurmountable obstacles to the extension of pardon. But then he may also go from us less disposed than he was to search the plague of his own heart, with diminished apprehensions of the dreadfulness of God's wrath, because no longer regarding himself as exposed to its outbreak. He may not be the distressed being that he was, but in the sudden getting quit of his distress he may also have got quit of much of that sense of the evil of sin which was gradually gaining firm possession of his soul, and thus through the ceasing to feel himself in peril he may be less tremblingly alive to his being in fault. And if we were to be thus instrumental to the extricating a man at too early a period from the goadings and threatenings of an agitated conscience so that he took to himself the privileges of Christianity ere his felt destitution had taught him their worth, oh, we cannot but fear that we should be also instrumental to the arresting if not destroying in his heart a renewing work, that we should produce in him a merely superficial religion, the malignity of his disease having never been discovered, the greatness of his necessities never ascertained, the moral wound never probed to the quick; and thus should we but furnish a fresh proof, how easy, and at the same time how fatal it is, to heal the hurt of the daughter of God's people slightly, and to say, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

We have further to remark, that the peculiar doctrines of Christianity are strongly offensive to the great body of men, and that on this account chiefly it is that there is so much reluctance to the bringing them forward, and so much readiness to explain them away. We have already referred in part to this matter, when speaking of endeavours at amalgamation and of the opposition there is, to the drawing broad distinctions between the religious and the irreligious. But there is a great deal of dislike to the gospel which is quite independent on the separation which it enjoins of the people of God from the people of the world. Even those who admit the necessity of this separation, and who are not to be charged with manifesting any wish to reduce the Christian standard to that of the world, may feel a repugnance to certain parts of the system which the New Testament unfolds, for we must allow that by taking the merit of our salvation altogether from ourselves, making us wholly without power, either to will or to do a good thing, and requiring of us that we depend for justification unreservedly upon one who died the death of a malefactor, and the Christian theology arms against itself many of the strongest of our natural feelings, for it assumes facts which we are disposed to contradict, and demands a submission which we are not willing to yield. We are not now, you will observe, considering the excellence of the Christian system, its wonderful adaptation to our wants and the impossibility of its being superseded by any religion which should leave us in whole or in part to work out our own deliverance. These are points upon which you are often addressed, and upon which we suppose you to be well agreed; we only now state that redemption through the blood and righteousness of a mediator clashes with our pride, is distasteful to our reason, and does direct violence to that desire of achieving our own safety which is among the strongest that holds sway within us. You cannot fail to be aware that the offence of the cross has not ceased, you must be suffi-

ciently aware that these are not days when men are called to join the noble army of martyrs, yet there is an opposition to the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, an opposition which gives as much cause now as there was in earlier days for the Saviour to exclaim—"Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." So that here is a precise case in which the known feelings of the generality of men place the teacher under a temptation to keep back truth, or of stating it so equivocally that its full force shall not be felt. He cannot be ignorant that if he set forth without reserve, or disguise the corruption and helplessness of man, insist on the perfect gratuitousness of salvation, and refer to God's mercy and distinguishing grace as first exciting the desire for deliverance, and then enabling us to lay hold upon the provided succours, he will have to encounter the antipathies of perhaps a majority of his hearers; and he is consequently and naturally moved to the concealing much, and the softening down more; and if he yield to the temptation, then we have that mixed and diluted theology which does not, indeed, exclude Christ, but assigns much to man, which without denying the meritorious obedience and sufferings of the Mediator soothes our pride with an assurance that by our good works we contribute something towards the attainment of everlasting happiness. We have nothing like a bold and full exhibition of Christ in his various offices as made unto us of God, "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption." But in the stead of this, we have the Saviour introduced just to make up our deficiencies, not as "all in all" to a lost world, but as furnishing a ground work on which we may build for ourselves. And if such be the theology with which the teacher is induced to gratify his hearers, what result may we expect to see effected? Why, we maintain, that by encouraging the opinion that men are not very far gone from original righteousness, that notwithstanding the fall, they retain a moral power of doing what shall be acceptable to God, and that their salvation is to result from the combination of their own efforts and the merits of Christ, we maintain that by encouraging such opinions as these, the teacher flatters his hearers with the most pernicious of all flattery, hiding from them their actual condition, and instructing them, how to miss, at the same time that they think they are securing deliverance. He may be said rather to hide the wound than to make any effort to heal it, and by administering a kind of anodyne which prevents suffering, to consign at once to an easy death and a wretched eternity. If men be not driven from every form and every degree of self-reliance, if they be not content to bow before the supremacy and sufficiency of the atonement, if they harbour the persuasion that they are in any way to share with Christ the honour of their deliverance, then the utmost which can be said of the theological system which they adopt and admire is, that it may be adapted for the giving present ease, but leaves unaverted the threatenings of future punishment. And if this be no exaggerated statement—and the whole Bible is our witness that it is not exaggerated—then may we confidently declare that the prophet and the priest amongst the Jews were not more chargeable with deceiving the people to their ruin, with accommodating their discourses to the national feeling, and thereby accelerating and aggravating the national disaster, than would be teachers who should exhibit a defective and garbled Christianity, and that upon the one as upon the other must be fastened the crime alleged by God in our text—"They have healed also the hurt of the

daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

Now, it might not be difficult to multiply these illustrations, showing how in other instances the very thing may still be done which God here denounces by his servant Jeremiah; but probably enough has been advanced to certify you not only of the possible occurrence but of the grievous peril which must lie in the substituting in religion what is superficial for what ought to be radical. It is on this that we are most anxious to fix your attention. We want to have you satisfied that there can be no falser kindness than that which should hide from men their real condition, and that it is the very extreme of danger when those who are tottering believe themselves secure. We have spoken to you of teachers as healing the hurt slightly, and we have shown you in how great peril they hereby place their patients; but, alas! alas! the patients themselves wish to be thus treated as God elsewhere says—"My people love to have it so." It is not thus in earthly things. The man who is threatened with bankruptcy does not desire to be misinformed as to the state of his affairs. The friend whom he consults may feel a natural reluctance to communicate unpleasant intelligence, but he would yet wish to be told the worst, since otherwise he cannot take the steps which the emergency may demand. Or, in another instance, scared by the bright eye and the hectic cheek of a darling child, the parents hasten to the physician, they would much rather be told at once of the danger than soothed into the belief that their fears are quite groundless. In the one case they might possibly, through God's blessing on means, avert the early death; in the other, they are left to indulge hope till there is space only for despair. Yes, but it is not thus in spiritual things. In the matters of eternity men have a sort of willingness to be deceived. All their preference is for the teacher who will best help in allaying those apprehensions of the future which will occasionally arise in the midst of dissipation and worldly-mindedness. Nay, they do not wait for the teacher to prophesy to them smooth things—they prophesy them to themselves. I should like to know in regard of those amongst you, who are still living a life of indifference and worldly-mindedness, whether they have not been guilty of disguising from themselves the real facts of their case—whether at various times, when conscience has been disturbed, they have not been active in inventing something specious with which to still the remonstrance, industrious in saying, peace, peace, rather than in seeking reconciliation with God. They have shrunk from knowing their disease; they have wished to hide it; they have been afraid to look upon the wound lest they should discover what might demand from them a rigid course of abstinence—the amputation of a right hand, the excision of a right eye, or force them, if we may so speak, to change the air, and forsake the scenes which they most like to frequent, and therefore have they eagerly seized on any nostrum rather than submit to a painful but necessary process, and have never considered the utter madness of preferring insensibility to health, and the certain ruin that must follow on tampering with sickness of the soul. It needs no small courage—we ought rather to say, it needs no small grace—to be willing to know the worst; not to be afraid of finding out how bad we are, how corrupt, how capable of the worst actions, if left to ourselves. This is a great point gained in spiritual things, it is a great point gained to be able to pray with David—"Search me, O God, and try me, and see if there be any wicked

way in me." We call it a great point gained to be willing to know the worst ; for so long as we stop short of this, we shall always be trying half measures, healing the hurt slightly, and therefore never reaching the root of the disease.

We counsel you then to be honest with yourselves, honest in observing the symptoms of spiritual sickness, honest in applying the remedies prescribed by the Bible. For our own part, we will not, God helping, be accessory to any amongst you deceiving themselves. If there be a covetous man amongst you, God forbid we should say—"Peace, peace;" we know there is no peace. "The covetous man," says the Apostle, "is an idolator;" an idolator must be far from the kingdom of heaven; if there be a sensual man amongst you, the slave of his appetites, we will not say, "Peace, peace." We know that there is no peace. We remember the emphatic words of Scripture—"Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor drunkards, shall inherit the kingdom of God." We remember that they who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If there be a self-righteous person amongst you, or one that is "halting between two opinions," or a worshipper of his own reason, or a procrastinator who is putting off the season of repentance, we will not say—"Peace, peace." We know there is no peace. How should there be? To the law and to the testimony be our appeal. And we are told, that they who would be wise must become as fools, that they who are not with Christ are against him. "And that now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." But if there are those amongst you as to whom we must take good heed, that we say not "peace, peace," we trust there are some, yea, many of a wholly different stamp; these are they—and may God mightily increase the number—who have come weary and heavy laden to the cross of Christ, who have sorrowed with a godly sorrow for sin, and who now believe with a living active faith in that Redeemer who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. To such we will indeed say, "Peace, peace," for to such there is peace. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Peace I leave with you," was Christ's parting legacy. "My peace I give unto you." "O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace." True Christians have only to depend on the promises of the gospel and to plead them in prayer. And may this be the happy experience of you all. "In all time of their tribulation, and in all time of their wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment" they will be kept by that "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

Sketches and Essays.

TARRY NOT.

A MESSAGE TO DELAYING SINNERS.

SHALL anything be allowed to come in between you and your hope for eternity? Will you not seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Will you allow yourselves to be so engrossed with the things which perish with the using, as to forget or forego the joy of the endless kingdom? You cannot have forgotten such solemn words as these, "Ye must be born again;" nor the terror-striking announcement, "The wages of sin is death;" nor the loud summons, "Awake, thou that sleepest;" nor the demand made upon your affections by God, "My son, give me thine heart;" nor the appeal to your fears, "The wicked shall be turned into hell;" nor the kind expostulation, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments;" nor the touching question, "Why will ye die?" nor the tender advice, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire;" nor the gracious invitation, "Come unto me;" nor the urgent message, "Seek the Lord while he may be found;" nor the prophetic proclamation, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints;" nor the terrible warning, "The Lord shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." You cannot have forgotten these things. They are surely too solemn, too momentous, too urgent, and too true to be forgotten. And will you venture to act as if these were all but the unreal words of man,—a fable or a lie?

Will you not receive them as in very deed the words of the eternal God? And will you not, without losing a moment, press into the kingdom? The entrance into it is free and unimpeded. There is no tax, nor toll, nor impost of any kind, either great or small, either modified, or in full. The way is clear and open,—no obstruction, no gate, no chain, no bar. And he who stands at that entrance, stands there, not to repel, but to invite you,—not to oppose your passage, or exact payment, but to bid you free welcome.

Once there was a hindrance,—a hindrance that seemed too vast to be surmounted. It was as if some rugged mountain-ridge had been flung across the highway, blocking up the entrance to the kingdom. But the Son of God came down in love, and swept these barriers away. He “put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews ix. 26). Or it was as if a ravine, deep as hell, at the bottom of which flowed the dark river that man had never crossed, had suddenly opened itself, that by its fearful breadth and depth it might bar all access. We might look across and see the goodly land afar off; but we could not reach it. The gulf yawned between. And we could only sit down and sigh despairingly, longing for a land that we could never hope to reach—

“The land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign.”

But the Son of God has come down, and in his love he has done for us what neither man nor angel could do. He has flung a bridge over the terrible ravine, at the expense of his own infinitely precious blood; and he has sent out the proclamation to the sons of men, without delay to avail themselves of it, and to enter into the kingdom. It is love that has done it all,—the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; it is the love of Godhead that has laid the foundations; it is the love of Godhead that has measured the span, and provided for the vast breadth required; it is the love of Godhead that has laid stone after stone of the vast structure: it is the love of God that has “sprung” the arch and fitted in the keystone of the wondrous fabric; it is the love of Godhead that has made the way so broad, and level, and unbroken, that even the step of feeble childhood or tottering age may not stumble there. Having then this “liberty,” this “boldness,” to cross the bridge, and enter the happy fields that lie beyond—the paradise that spreads itself out so gloriously to view—let us at once proceed, not with faint hearts or lingering footsteps, but with a true heart, and in the full assurance of faith. God invites; who shall hinder? God beckons you on; who shall bid you off? God says, Come; who shall say, Stay? God sends his messengers to beseech you to make haste, as I do now; who shall persuade you to hesitate, loiter, or destroy?

We may use many arguments. Take but a few out of the many. It is death to remain where you are; will you not then cross? It is life, everlasting life, to set your foot upon yon fields of living green; will you not then cross? On this side of that gulf there rests the wrath of God,

with all the guilt, and the curse, and the pain, and the terror, and the darkness with which that wrath smites the sinner; while beyond it stretch the green plains which the storm never wastes, nor the shadow darkens, but over which the sunshine of infinite love sheds its abiding gladness; will you not then cross? You know not how soon this blessed opportunity may end; for death is near, and the grave is ready to open for you, and the pestilence is hovering over you, and the signs of the coming of the Son of Man are becoming more and more visible: will you not then cross *now*, yes *now*? Instead of returning to your sins or your pleasures, or your partizanships, will you not at once betake yourself to this gracious God, that you may taste the forgiveness of his love; will you not go straight to him who says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out?"

The day is coming when the rocks shall rend, and the mountains crumble down, and the towers fall, and the forests burn, and the cities lie in ashes, and the sky be wrapt in flame, and the graves open, and the trumpet sound, and the great white throne be placed. What, then, will ye do in that day of terror? How will you face your Judge? What account can you give in? What sentence can you look for from him that sitteth on the throne?

May I not ask you to come to a decision *to-day*? yes, **THIS HOUR**? The matter is one which does not admit of postponement. It demands your *immediate* consideration. For the issues are infinite, and they all turn upon the few days of our brief life on earth.

"He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned!" Such is the alternative. Oh, is it not one to make each unprepared soul tremble, and resolve that he will not risk the delay of another hour, nor peril his immortal hopes by making light of sin and judgment,—by trifling any longer either with Jehovah's love or with Jehovah's wrath. Love and wrath! Infinite love and infinite wrath! Eternal love, eternal wrath! Can a man trifle with either? Can one of you lie down in peace to-night if conscious that you have slighted that love or defied that wrath? That wrath, once kindled, will be beyond conception terrible, and it shall never be quenched, but shall burn on without abatement,—burn on throughout eternity! That love is, beyond all utterance, precious, and it knows neither change nor end. O receive it and be blest! It will freely forgive you all your sins. It will lift off all your burdens. It will break all your chains. It will cleanse you from all your unrighteousness. It will clothe your nakedness. It will

enrich your poverty. It will heal your diseases. It will enlighten all your darkness. It will dry up all your tears, and soothe all your sorrows. It will make you an heir of God, a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. Oh, receive then the love of which we bring you the good news; for "herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son into the world that we might live through him." Oh, receive this love,—receive it now; and you will know with what an atmosphere of peace it can surround you, what a rainbow of blessed promise it can bend upon the darkest cloud that ever rested on your dwelling; and what an everlasting blessedness it can provide for you, when these old heavens and this polluted earth shall have been exchanged for "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

A SABBATH SCHOOL IN HEAVEN.

A FRIEND remarked in our Sabbath School, a short time since, that "there would be a Sabbath school in heaven; that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, and John, would be teachers in it; and that we should be always learning more and more of God, and his great plan of mercy to save a lost world."

This is a beautiful thought. A Sabbath school in heaven! Who would not like to be a member of that school? Children love to go to Sabbath school here, and sing of "that sweet story of old, when Jesus was here among men;" and how much more joyous must be the gathering of that great company whom no man can number, "amid the throne of God in heaven," there to join in the song of Moses and the Lamb!

Here children love to go to Sabbath school, to study God's holy word, and learn not only the blessed words of Christ, but the story of the patriarchs, prophets, and the apostles; but how much greater the pleasure to sit at the feet of these patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and learn of them about those great truths and mysteries that we cannot understand here!

If our Sabbath Schools here are so pleasant and profitable, where there is so much sin mixed with all that we do and say, how infinitely more profitable and pleasant will be the gathering together of God's chosen ones in heaven, where there is no sin to mar our enjoyments!

A Sabbath school in heaven! What heavenly instruction we shall there receive! Who will be our teachers there? I think I hear some children say, I hope I shall be in David's class, or John's class, or Paul's class. Yes, that would be a privilege indeed, to be in the great Sabbath school of heaven, and to have David, or Paul, or John for our teachers.

But I think I should like to have Noah for my teacher. He would know so much of the world before and after the flood. He could tell us so much of the trial of his faith during those long years when the ark was building, and how the people laughed, and sneered, and scorned, while he kept at work preparing the ark for the salvation of himself and his family. He fully believed all that God told him of the coming flood. How much he could tell us of that great flood that we would like to know!

Children sometimes feel very sad when they go to school with an imperfect lesson, and there the teachers do not always feel and act kindly to those who fail in their lessons. But how different will it be in heaven! There the lessons will be just suited to our capacities; we shall always have perfect lessons, and we shall go on more and more, and never forget what we have learned.

I hope all the children of our Sabbath schools who may read these lines, will ponder well their duty, of preparing while young to join that school in heaven. Will not every one strive to become members of that heavenly Sabbath school?

PRAISE THE LORD.

A HARVEST-MESSAGE.

Is not God speaking to us most loudly out of the midst of this joyous abundance? Comes there not a voice from every field or furrow, saying, "Praise the Lord?" Comes there not a voice from every barn and storehouse, saying, "Praise the Lord?" Comes there not a voice from each morning sun that rises over us in such cloudless calm, saying, "Praise the Lord?" Comes there not a voice from the fresh bracing breeze of dawn and sunset, as it wanders o'er our fields to give the last touch of ripeness to our corn and mellowness to our fruits, saying, "Praise the Lord?" Comes there not a voice from the harvest-moon,

which has watched the ripening and the reaping of these fields, and flung its showers of silver, night after night, over the luxuriant acres of earth's waving gold, saying, "Praise the Lord?" Comes there not a voice from these falling leaves and fading blossoms, that have stood so long as witnesses to all this plenty, saying, "Praise the Lord?"

Shall we not listen to this voice of God, speaking to us so articulately in such ways as these? Shall we not give heed to this twofold voice, which, coming on the one hand from the pestilence, says, "Repent," and on the other from the harvest, says, "Praise?" Shall we allow any petty interest to come between us and this repentance or this praise? Shall we be engrossed with the rattle of some car in the street, when the dread thunder is reverberating in mighty majesty from cloud to cloud, and from peak to peak, and the lightning is splintering the rocks, and striking down some time-honoured tower or temple? Shall we permit the noise of earthly discord to drown that glorious voice that speaks to us so solemnly from the heaven of heavens?

DRESS.*

A WORD TO GIRLS.

A QUARTER of an hour before the time for closing the school, *Mr. Faithful* rang the bell to call attention, and to announce that he was about to address the girls.

Mr. Faithful.—"My dear young friends, I wish to say a few words to you on the subject of dress, as I know you will be making some change at the approaching Christmas. It is a subject on which I have often spoken to you; and I am pleased to notice one or two of my elder girls who followed my advice when at school, and who are now respectably married; themselves, their husbands, children, and cottages, showing fruit of all the instruction received at the Sabbath school. Such women are an example and an ornament to our congregations, and I wish we had more like them. It is for this reason I speak to you all, but particularly

* From "What shall I Wear? a Word for Young Women." By the author of "Peter Pious," &c. London: Wertheim, Macintosh, and Hunt.

to those in the Bible classes. You are able to earn money for yourselves ; do not spend it all on your backs ; think of those dear to you. Does your father, or your mother, or do not the little ones, want something which you could help to buy ? Or could you not put something into the Savings' Bank against a rainy day, if you spent less on your dress ? I would remind you of a higher motive, which should influence many of you. Since last year, many of you have renewed your promise to renounce the 'pomp and vanity of this wicked world.' Now, this, among other things, includes gay dressing. Don't let Satan get the advantage over you. He uses *dress* to draw you into loving 'the world and the things of the world ;' it has ensnared many a girl, and led her to ruin. O, beware of vanity. The command of God is, 'Be clothed with humility.' It is the custom of the times to be clothed in pride and vanity ; but 'pride is not of God.' It is melancholy to see girls dressed out, as we often see them, in all the folly of finery, while cleanliness and simple neatness are neglected. Fondness of dress is more productive of ruin to a greater number of young women than any other cause whatever. Be advised, then, my dear young friends, pray to God to guide you in your choice, and then you will not be dressed unsuitably. 'Let your moderation be known unto all men ;' do not copy in your dress those above you in station ; remember what is suitable for a lady is out of place for those who work for their living. They always look well dressed who attend to the apostle's advice, 'that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, not in costly array ;' that is, dress nicely, have pretty clothes ; yes, *adorn* yourselves,' don't be untidy or dirty ; be as nice as you can, but let it be in '*modest apparel* ;' no smart finery, or bonnets off your heads, and such like things. Endeavour to avoid extremes, and so to dress as to excite no observation. Think of what I have said, my dear girls ; and I hope if any of you have already ordered any gay clothing, that my warning may be in time for you to get it changed. I will not keep you longer, but ask you to learn this text, 'Whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God ;' for, if you keep this in mind, and let the 'glory of God' influence you, even in the choice of dress, I am sure I shall never have cause to be ashamed of any of you."

Mr. Faithful then rang the bell for them to get ready for church. As soon as the service was over, Maggie Meanwell came up to Fanny Flimsy, and said, "Didn't our minister speak beautifully ? it fairly made me cry. I hope Mrs. Finery won't have put those roses into my bonnet before to-morrow, for I could not wear them ; and I shall get her to put

some violets instead. You know he said we might have what was pretty, if it were modest and not costly!"

Fanny Flimsy.—"Well, you can do as you like, but I don't see what business it is of his to say what we are to wear; he has not to pay for our things."

Maggie Meanwell.—"Oh, Fanny, don't speak like that, you know he only wants to do us good; don't you remember what pains he took with us? It brought it all to my mind to-day, when he mentioned it."

HANNAH.*

Does not the Christian mother's heart glow with hope and joy, when she thinks of Hannah and Samuel, the very types of a happy mother and son: of early training resulting in early conversion, and the effects of early conversion continuing through a long life of active piety, and useful service to God and his people?

If there were more Hannahs, would there not be more Samuel's? If thou wouldst have, Christian mother, thy child a Samuel or an Augustine, be thyself a Hannah or a Monica. The child of thy prayers, of thy vows, and of thy tears, will be in the Lord's best time, the child; of thy praises, thy rejoicings, thy richest consolation. Yet thy faith will not end with the dedication of thy child; Samuel was the son of his mother's vows, but also "his mother taught him;" and such is the practical habit of godliness, that faith in vowing quickens diligence in teaching. The child truly consecrated, will be brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Bridges on Proverbs xxxi.)

Christian Parents! are you as anxious that your child should be born again? Is it the one absorbing desire of your heart that he should be the Lord's? Do you imitate Hannah in her tears, and prayers, and longing for this one thing? Are your petitions brought into the sanctuary, and so presented as to be taken up and responded to by your great High Priest?

There are many who desire these things, but not exclusively. They are gratified to have their children admired for their beauty in infancy,

* From "Abraham and his Children." By Emily Gosse. London: Nisbet and Co.

for their wit and talent as they grow older. Few are displeased to hear their little ones admired and flattered, for those advantages which are shared alike by the converted and unconverted. If our children see this, no wonder that they set a great value on those distinctions which the carnal mind can appreciate, and that they do not really credit our assertions that one thing only is needful for them, without which all worldly advantages are vanity.

This we may be sure was not Hannah's course. She had but one object or aim; she asked a son of the Lord, she devoted him to the Lord, she brought him up for the Lord, she brought him early to the Lord's presence, and never resumed the gift which she had early devoted to the giver.

Hannah not only prayed for her son but she taught him to pray. He was young when his mother weaned him and brought him to Eli in Shiloh, but it is said of him that "he worshipped the Lord there." How shall we teach our children to pray? While they are unconverted we cannot. But they ought to hear *us* pray, they ought to be silent and quiet while *we* pray for *them*. But I am supposing that they are born again, in answer to a mother's prayers. In this case she will soon find that they "Lift their little hands to pray."

In this a good mother may assist and incite them: she may teach them by example, and by gently reminding them of blessings received, and wants to be supplied,—and she will soon find that "out of the mouth of her babes and sucklings God hath perfected praise."

Hannah kept her Samuel at her side—she would not leave him with strangers, even that she might go up to worship the Lord in Shiloh. Till he was old enough to accompany her, she considered it her place to remain with him. Who can tell what injury to soul or body he might have sustained had he been consigned for a few weeks or even days to the care of thoughtless servants?

Happy is the mother who like Hannah is permitted to keep her child constantly under her own eye; who leaves him not to any care save her own, and that of those like-minded, who love the same Lord, tread in the same steps. Even to such, a wise mother will not needlessly confide her treasure, but form his mind by her own, and feed it from her own lips of love and wisdom.

FAMILY PRAYER.

THE patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, wherever in their pilgrimages they fixed on a place of residence, erected an altar to God for family devotion, and called on the name of the Lord.

Joshua resolved that, as for him and his family, they would serve the Lord—that is, worship him.

Job practised family worship. “He sent and sanctified his children, and rose early in the morning and offered burnt-offerings, according to the number of them all. Thus did Job continually.”

David, having spent one day in bringing the ark from the house of Obed-edom to the place he had prepared for it, and in presenting peace-offerings before the Lord, returned at night to bless his household—that is, pray for blessings upon his family, or to attend upon family devotion.

Cornelius, the Centurion, it is said, “feared God with all his house”—meaning, worshipped him with his family.

In the Lord’s Prayer, we have a command for family devotion. “After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven.” The form of prayer is plural. It must, therefore, mean social prayer, and if social, then family prayer; for a family is the most proper place to engage in this devotion.

Paul, in his Epistle to the Colossians, having pointed out the duty of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, adds—“Continue in prayer; watch in the same with thanksgivings.” The subject upon which he was speaking leads us to conclude that he meant family prayer.

In his Epistle to the Ephesians, he enjoins it as a duty to “pray always with all prayer”—that is, to offer prayer of every kind, and in every form, and at every proper season. Family prayer must, therefore, be included in his injunction.

The Apostle Peter exhorts husbands and wives to live together in the discharge of the duties of conjugal affection and Christian obedience.

THE LITTLE THINKER.

My little boy, not four years of age, one day crept into my sick-room, and coming to my bed-side, asked if I wanted company. After receiving an encouraging smile, he got upon it, and lay for some time apparently asleep; suddenly he arose, and looking anxiously at me, asked—"Does God make all things?" Upon receiving an answer in the affirmative, the tears started in his eyes, and throwing himself in a passion of grief upon my bosom, he exclaimed—"Then I can't love him, for he makes my father poorly." Surprise at the depth of thought and feeling in one so young rendered me speechless. I could but press my darling closer to my heart, and mingle my tears with his. Alas! how often, like that dear child, have we harboured hard thoughts of God! When sorrow and trial have overtaken us, have we not despondingly asked, Can this be a token of my heavenly Father's love? Or can this dark, mysterious dispensation emanate from One who regards me with affection? Oh yes! tried believer, all, all results from infinite love. The tempest and storm, the fierce lightning and destructive earthquake, are but agents to work out thy Father's beneficent designs in the economy of nature; and affliction, sorrow, and trial are no less necessary in carrying out his gracious will in that grace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, said "the Man of Sorrows" to his disconsolate disciples. And whence came they now before the throne?—they who now look back with adoring gratitude, and admire the wisdom and love of him who led them? Once they were familiar with tears, they knew what sorrows meant as well as we; but they are now safely housed in those "many mansions." Then cheer up, desponding heart, if beset with similar trials; thou art upheld and guarded by the same Omnipotent hand and unerring wisdom.

HYMNS.

CHILDREN learn hymns readily, and do not easily forget them. Let Christian parents, then, teach their children hymns, as many as possible of those gems that are so thickly scattered through our language, and thus link the sweetest memories of childhood with the most precious lessons of Divine truth.

RESPONSIBILITIES.*

"Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darknesss."

Matthew xxv. 80.

HAVE you read of the servant who hid in the earth
The talent his Master had given,
When, by diligent use, to redouble its worth,
He ought to have faithfully striven?

My child, have you talents,—God gave them to you,
And will surely require them again :
Take care not to waste them ; if ever so few,
Let them not have been given in vain.

You have *speech* ; then remember to watch your words well,
And let them be gentle and kind ;
It may seem a small matter, but no one can tell
The comfort a word leaves behind.

You have *time* ; every minute and hour of the day
Is lent by your Father in heaven :
Make haste to improve, ere it passes away,
The talent so graciously given.

You have *influence*, too, though it seems very small,
Yet in greater or lesser degree,
You affect the improvement and comfort of all
With whom you may happen to be.

And the child who in earnest endeavours to live
As an heir of eternity ought,
By his silent example a lesson may give,
Which by word he could never have taught.

Then consider the talents entrusted to you,
And may they be duly improved ;
Let your service be hearty and free, as is due
From children so greatly beloved.

* From "Thoughts in Verse, for Christian Children." London : Hamilton and Co., Paternoster Row.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE THREEFOLD CAUSE OF A REJECTED GOSPEL.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 8, 1859,

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A.,

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."—Matthew xxii. 5, 6.

Few more striking parables are found than that which formed the subject of our Sunday's gospel. It was called forth, as we see, by the persevering and incessant opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees; and to them, as well as to the nation at large, the parable must have come home with peculiar force. It told how God had long had it in his purposes to prepare a feast for the hungry and distressed spirits of men. And to the Jews first was the word of this salvation sent. Prophets had foretold of it; poets had sung of it; types had foreshadowed it; so that by the time John the Baptist had begun to preach the gospel, it might have been supposed that an expectant world would have been all eagerness for the message, lifting up their heads, because their redemption was drawing nigh. But the message was not so welcomed even by the Jewish nation. Why it was not, and the awful desolation which followed to them because it was not, the parable describes with much of graphic power; and long afterwards would these cavilling rulers remember the Master's concluding words—"The king was wroth, and he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their cities."

But there is a secondary and spiritual application of the parable; and

Mother's Magazine, December, 1859.

this will be found to be much the same, whether as addressed to the Jewish people or to ourselves. The feast prepared, the invitation slighted, the king dishonoured and insulted in the person of the bidden guests ; these are parts of the parable which we see at once, either do, or may belong to us all, this day. We have all been bidden to the Marriage Supper ; we have seen the spiritual table spread, and truly it is a feast of fat things ; it is full, it is various—enough for all, and yet suited for each. There is a portion for seven, and also for eight. For the young there are counsels, for the old there are promises, for the mourner there is comfort, and for the sick a cure. Yet, plentiful as this marriage feast is, they are few that will accept the invitation to partake of it. The very messengers who bring the tidings of its preparation cannot always escape contempt, and opposition, and unkindness. “But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise : and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.”

The passage thus opened may be taken to set forth the threefold cause of a rejected gospel ; namely, indifference, intense worldly occupation, and the enmity of the carnal mind. Let us see, if in our day, the offers of grace be not in danger of encountering a similar reception.

First, then, it would seem that the gospel gets neglected by many from indifference, from a light estimate of its objects ; from a recklessness whether they have any part in its benefits or no. The persons invited made light of the message ; thought the king’s servants were urging their requests with needless earnestness, as well as setting forth with exaggerated importance the consequences of disobediences. Hence, in this first case, no insult is offered to the messenger ; “He is true to his vocation, but he is mistaken ; he is honest in his profession, he has talked himself into the belief that the gospel rejected and the soul lost, a despised salvation and an offended God ; a heart unchanged and a heaven unopened must inevitably go together.” “We respect his sincerity,” say they, “but have no sympathy with his fears.” “Paul, thou art beside thyself ;” these are not the words of truth and soberness—“Ah, Lord God, they say of me, Doth he not speak parables !” In the hands of some, however, the slight put upon the gospel takes even a less excusable form than this ; by which, I mean that no reason is alleged for their neglect, either in the avowed objects of the gospel, or in the mode of setting forth its claims. Such persons neither object, nor deny, nor complain, nor disbelieve. They have God’s truth put before them with the utmost plainness of preaching ; they listen to requirements of spiritual character which would condemn them if they went no further back than yesterday ; they have set before them as integral elements of a renewed life things which appear foolishness to them, and yet they never deem the inquiry worth a thought on which side the folly lies. Their sin is, that they cannot be persuaded to give their minds to the gospel claims ; cannot realise the fact

that great and everlasting issues are suspended on the acceptance or rejection of them. It may be that the words they hear every Sunday have a meaning ; it may be that there is a form of godliness which is without experience of its power, and without promise of its reward ; it may be that some who are not as other men are, and even better than most other men are, shall yet be no better than other men in the retributions of another world. These things may be ; but whether they are is a question which, without regard to consequences they think may be left in doubt. Provision for the more terrible alternative is not needful in this case. We should take security for our health, if that were failing ; for our property, if that were attacked ; for our life, if that were at stake ; but for an imperilled soul, an endangered salvation, a risked and hazarded immortality many of us have no unquiet thoughts whatever. We live, we die, we venture our hopes of heaven upon the desperate possibility that all may come right at the last. Here, then, we have the keystone of much of our practical infidelity. Men are godless, because they are heedless ; without hope, because without care about their hope ; making light of the offer of salvation, because making light of their own need of salvation. There are other causes that work with some, no doubt. There may be young men who would decline to come to the gospel supper because of the sins they must renounce, and the wedding garment they must wear, and the moral strictness of heart and life to which they would be committed by that holy fellowship ; and there may be men who would rather remain parted from Christ than be parted from those grey-haired follies which look so unseemly in men dwelling in the very suburbs of the place of tombs. But indifference far more than either of these causes keeps both old and young away. They would answer Christ's invitation if they would think. They would obey if they were but serious ; they would return with the king's messengers if only they would realise as God's truth the invitations and declarations of the gospel, if they could but dispossess themselves of the notion which they have formed, that the undying worm is a preacher's fiction and eternal torment no more than painted fire. But a constant tendency to make light of what they hear prevails over every other consideration. The nature of sin, the demands of holiness, the fixed conditions of law, the purity of heaven, the indestructibleness of the soul, the Almighty's fidelity to his engagements—these are never apprehended by them as things which by the eternal constitution of heaven's moralities alter not. An undefined hope insinuates itself that the stringencies of the Divine government will somehow or other be relaxed in their favour. No matter what principle of God's kingdom would be compromised thereby, nor what perfection of his nature would be dishonoured, there must be, they fondly imagine, a sense in which as a man he must lie, and as a son of man he must repent. And on this assumed necessity, this tremendous calculation of some change in the unchangeable, they make light of all invitation, of all warning

and each one goeth his way, "one to his farm, and another to his merchandise."

And this leads to the second reason assigned in the parable for the common rejection of the gospel, namely, intense worldly occupation, an encumbered and over-anxious spirit, an absorbing pursuit of things seen and temporal to the neglect of those which are unseen and eternal—"They went their ways, one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise." Now, a striking characteristic of the gospel system is its practical adaptation to the circumstances of human nature. It is not a religion for the visionary, and the theorist, and the recluse. But it adapts itself to man as it finds him, liable to be harassed with cares, or oppressed with duties, or toiling for subsistence, or distracted with family claims, or maintaining the race of competition with his neighbours, and it does not require him to throw off these anxieties, or even suppose it possible that he could throw them off; but just shows him how they may be subordinated to those higher ends of his being which give a man peace at the last. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Be "not slothful in business," and yet at the same time be "servant in spirit, serving the Lord."

The sin of the persons referred to in the text, then, consists in the assumed incompatibility of the claims of earth and the claims of heaven; or, at all events, in an unwillingness to give to the concerns of eternity any place in their thoughts, until those of time have been attended to. "They went their ways, one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise." Here the first thing we take notice of is, that the gospel is not positively rejected by such people; there is no declared refusal to accept the invitation of the king's servants, but it is a mere putting of the question by; a sort of making, as if one did not hear; a turning aside, as if the subject mooted were one on which we would rather not be pressed too closely. Brethren, is there not a great deal of this among gospel hearers in the present day? There is no resistance to what they hear, no making light of it, no stolid indifference about it, but a sudden turning off, a deafness put on for the time, an appearance of some urgent and irresistible call elsewhere. The young man whom Christ asked to give up his possessions did not say whether he would or no, but suddenly, and without a word, walked away. Yes, brethren, but did the grace of God follow him where he went? did you ever read of him coming back again? Did he not, on turning his back on Christ turn his back for ever on the gates of heaven? Let the thought have its weight with us; it is a practical rejection of Christ not to come when he calls us. Say to his messenger—"Go thy way for this time," and Christ may say to thee—"Go thy way for ever." We shrink from the thought of trampling on or casting behind us the gracious offers of God. But we do all this, let us remember, when we do not accept these offers. The sin of the men we are reading

and for which they were shut out of the marriage supper, was mere practical neglect ; they neither opposed, nor scoffed, nor doubted, but when called of God, they took no notice of it, " but went their way."

Another observable thing in this part of the parable is, that the occupations to which these men severally went were lawful and proper occupations. The farm would not yield produce without tilling, nor could the merchandise be turned to account without assiduity and diligence. It is obvious, therefore, that the thing reprehended is such an undue and exclusive attachment to the world and its concerns as leaves us neither time, nor energy, nor spirit for doing anything either for God or for our own souls. It is to be feared that many of our men of business and active professions leave their homes at the beginning of the day much too soon for their soul's health. God should have the beginning of our strength, the fresh incense of our first morning thoughts, our mind's clearest, and our heart's best. Going home earlier in the evening, even if we were sure that the time so redeemed would be given to the soul, would not answer the purpose. We want a foundation of holy thoughts to begin the day with ; something that will bear the weight of its burdens, and fortify the harassed spirit against the strife, and struggle, and wear and tear of a restless and competing world. Our Divine Lord did not enter on his field of conflict until he had submitted to holy baptism—till he had prayed—till the Spirit of God had descended upon him—till a voice from the opening heaven's had spoken—as if the tenderness of his human spirit needed an assurance that God would stand by him in the coming struggle. The example should instruct us. The world is a wilderness, not a solitude, but peopled with a legion of tempters, each one with his several solicitations to evil—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." The morning is the time, therefore, for girding on the harness, not for putting it off. We should sharpen our weapons before the strife begins, taking to ourselves "the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." Go not forth, then, to your daily duties, brethren, without a full quiver of texts and promises. A word hidden in the heart in the morning may keep you from sinning against God all the day. But let us not suppose the principle to be restricted in its application to duties derived from the farm or from the merchandise ; these are but names for any form of earthly preference occupying God's place in the heart. Many went their ways from the king's service, who had neither ground to till nor wares to exchange, but they had something which would make them impatient while the messengers were describing the treasures of the gospel feast, something which made them think they could be happier at a feast of their own preparing, which caused them not to refuse, not even to answer, but simply to go their way. And many among us are doing the same. What is the father or the husband doing when pleading want of time at one end of the day and weariness of spirit at

the other, as a reason why neither servants nor little ones are sanctified by the word of God and by prayer? What is the wife or the mother doing when all the lofty capabilities and gifts of womanhood, to train minds, to form characters, to visit and relieve poverty, to forge anew that broken chain which should bring rich and poor more together, are squandered and wasted in some of the thousand ways which modern ingenuity has invented for killing time—time, which after they have killed, they would one day give worlds if they could bring to life again? What are our young men doing, who, having their lot cast on days of intelligence, and enterprise, and combined effort, with doors of sanctified usefulness opened to them on the right hand and the left, will not do something towards helping on God's work and showing that they are not living to themselves? What are our young women doing, especially those among them, who through the bounty of Providence, "toil not, neither do they spin," and who instead of qualifying themselves for stations of usefulness—for intelligent companions and discreet wives, teachers of the ignorant, or guides of the young, consume the morning of their days in a course of elaborate nothingness, or in employments where the highest excellence they could attain to would not give them one improved feeling or one new idea? What, I say, are all these doing, but inverting the order of the Divine economy, putting things out of their right place, telling the King of heaven he must wait a longer turn, his messengers are both too soon and too urgent? And so each goes heedless and unthinking away, "the one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise."

Brethren, I am alive to the great difficulties in the practical application of this part of our text. An undue attachment to worldly things is a sin almost as hard to discern as it is hard to cure. The proper line which we have to draw is between too entirely separating ourselves from the world so as to neglect our proper duties, and being too much joined to the world so as to make it our portion and our all. But so far as to become a rule for individual guidance, the drawing of such a line is impossible. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He sees there is a danger; he must know that there is not an employment or a pursuit of life which may not become sin. Its lawfulness, its necessity, its tendency to promote the highest ends of our social and moral being cannot prevent the moral employment itself from becoming our soul's betrayal and our soul's ruin. The world to us is just what each man makes it—his profit or his poison, his blessing or his bane, his school of holy discipline or his field to wander, and stray in, and to be lost. It is not money that is the root of all evil, but the love of money. It is not setting our hands, and feet, and thoughts on things that are on earth that God forbids, but our setting our affections there. A man may be arrayed harmlessly with all the honours the world can give, provided he hold with them the honour that cometh from God. Though earth should multiply around him its most endearing ties, they could be no occasion of falling to

him who trusts to God for his portion and looks to heaven as his home. Use this world then as not abusing it. This must be our rule. And abuse it we do, when we give to it that which does not belong to it—when we give to it time which is God's, money which is God's, affections which are God's; when—not now and then, for this may happen to the best of us—but when as a habit, and rule, and practice, we have no heart for God's work, and no delight or happiness in his service, when we cannot come when he calls us, or stay when he bids us, or go when he sends us, or being at a distance, and loving our distance, go each one away, "the one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise."

But it is important to notice a third form of opposition to the gospel pointed out in the parable, or the enmity of the carnal mind—"And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them." To the primary reference intended here, I have adverted already. The persecutions of the early Christians have passed into a proverb. They were stoned; they were sawn asunder; they were slain with the sword; they walked about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. These are illustrations of our text, you will say, which the world will probably see no more; neither will the genius of modern civilization permit that the faithful servants of God should any more be spitefully entreated. Well, in this country we may hope not, and wherever a healthy Protestantism has sway, we may hope not. I dare not predict the same of those who are under the dominion of unchanged and unchanging Rome. The spiritual application of the passage, however, is, as already intimated, not so much personal opposition to the preachers of the gospel, as mental and moral opposition to the principles of the gospel—repugnance to its doctrines and hatred to its rule. The expression seems designed to set forth the inextinguishable enmity which the mind, the carnal mind, entertains towards the things of God. They cannot but hate the gospel of Christ; it wounds their pride; it offends their self-righteousness; it disturbs their ancient complacencies; it requires them to unthink, and unsay, and undo much that they have never questioned, as if all their soul's life had to be begun again. Enmity then to the reign of Christ and to the truths of his gospel is found in the heart of all unconverted men, and is the reason of their rejecting his kindest offers. They do not wish to be what the gospel proposes to make them, nor to do what the word of God commands them. They have no wish to live a life of faith, a life of prayer, a life of holy and conscientious obedience, a life by which God is honoured and the world is blessed, and therefore they find an easy quarrel with the system which enjoins these things. It is misunderstood, they will say; it is overstrained; it is figuratively expressed. We will not believe these severities of a kind and merciful God, or leave so narrow an entrance to the joys of heaven. Thus, the truth of God gets complimented away. Christ is again betrayed with a kiss. Con-

cealed enmity lurks under high-sounding commendations of the gospel, and that very servant who warns so faithfully of their soul's danger becomes their enemy, because he tells them the truth. "And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them." On the latter part of the parable—the appearance of a man in the supper who had not on a wedding garment, I must take another opportunity of speaking. At present, let it suffice to exhort one another that we make no excuse to ourselves for neglecting the gracious invitations of the king's son. Whatever our circumstances or conditions, that word holds true—"All things are ready." Spiritual illumination is ready—converting and renewing grace is ready—the Father is ready to hear—the Spirit is ready to help—the Son is ready to bless and save. O, let us see that we "refuse not him that speaketh." The sin of a rejected gospel was no doubt great in the Jews. The only answer the king's messengers could return was, that though "all things were ready," the invited guests were not ready—nay, rather that they made light of the invitation, light of heaven, light of their souls, light of God. And judgment came upon them for these things, and then your natural inquiry for us—"If they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth?"—if they were punished for rejecting the Saviour, despised, and crucified, how shall we escape, if for greed of gain, or desire of ease, or love of this present world, we turn away from a Saviour risen, ascended, glorified? Or, to put the supposition as it is made by the Apostle himself—"If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward—How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

THE
MOTHER'S MAGAZINE,
AND
FAMILY PREACHER.

Know this ark is charm'd
With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employed.
With spells that impious Egypt never knew :
With invocations to the living God,
I twisted every tender reed together,
And with a prayer did every osier weave.—Mrs. H. MOORE.

Mothers, above all other human agents, hold in their hands the momentous trust of moulding the intellect and the heart of successive generations.

If all women were the Christians they ought to be, how quickly would the world be filled with the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ! The coming generation might live in a new earth, and celebrate the final triumphs of the cross.

LONDON :
JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,
NORTH SIDE ST. PAUL'S, AND PATERNOSTER ROW.

1860.

10

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
SKETCHES AND ESSAYS :—		<u>Little Gems for Little Folks</u>	198
<u>A Leaf from the Tree of Life</u>	184	<u>Live for Jesus</u>	199
<u>A Letter Addressed to a Mother</u> <u>on the Birth of Her First-Born</u> <u>Son</u>	150	<u>Lois and Eunice</u>	31
<u>A Mother's Duties</u>	55	<u>Looking to Jesus</u>	274
<u>Bearing one Another's Burdens</u>	14	<u>Man's Ways and God's Ways</u>	264
<u>Bitter Tears, and How to Escape</u> <u>Them</u>	193	<u>Making Things Pleasant</u>	276
<u>But now are they Hid from Thine</u> <u>Eyes</u>	121	<u>Mothers can do Great Things</u>	261
<u>Card Playing</u>	29	<u>Naomi and Ruth</u>	3
<u>Christ Alone</u>	227	<u>Never Despair</u>	145
<u>Christ Formed in Us</u>	217	<u>Parental Duty</u>	30
<u>Come Over and Help us</u>	172	<u>Peace</u>	160
<u>Conversions by Hymns</u>	270	<u>Praying Mothers</u>	107
<u>Dissuasives from Uncharitableness</u>	85	<u>Present Salvation</u>	149
<u>Dying Poor and Dying Rich</u>	175	<u>Power of True Religion</u>	19
<u>Earth's Resurrection-Day</u>	179	<u>Put Christ in Your Will</u>	208
<u>Faith and the Finished Work</u>	184	<u>Rebekah</u>	73
<u>Farthest from the Kingdom</u>	128	<u>Repentance</u>	174
<u>He giveth His Beloved Sleep</u>	63	<u>She hath Done What She Could</u>	49
<u>Horrible Massacre of Christians</u> <u>in Syria</u>	169	<u>Sin in a Baby's Heart</u>	180
<u>How to make Home Happy</u>	1	<u>Sorrow in Service</u>	152
<u>Is the Concert the Place for the</u> <u>Christian?</u>	221	<u>Sufferings of the Jews</u>	62
<u>Jesus and the Happy Family at</u> <u>Bethany</u>	82	<u>The Babe and his Friends</u>	56
<u>Light at Eventide</u>	123	<u>The Babe and his Friends</u>	76
		<u>The Balance</u>	54
		<u>The Bible Confirmed by the Dis-</u> <u>coveries at Nineveh</u>	23
		<u>The Burning and the Shining</u> <u>Light</u>	100
		<u>The Discipline of Piety for Use</u> <u>and Permanence</u>	124
		<u>The Holy Child</u>	266

CONTENTS.

	Page			Page
The Law a School-Master unto			The Welcome Home . . .	5
Christ	230		The Wife's Cross . . .	21
The late Rev. Alex. Fletcher, D.D.	241		Thy Beloved	135
The Light in the Window . . .	223		Walking Circumspectly . . .	17
The Little Home Missionary in			What have We Left? . . .	27
India	205		What Lucy' Mama said, and what	
The Mother	97		Lucy did	159
The Preciousness of Christ's Sym-			Why Stand ye Here all the Day	
pathy with our Infirmities . . .	9		Idle?	61
The Satisfying Conclusion . . .	153			
The Still Hour	174		POETRY :—	
The Troublesome Member . . .	108		Home	16
The Troublesome Member . . .	180		I Sought Thee, O my Saviour . .	129
The Two Brothers	201		Memorial Lines	64
The Two Cousins	154		O Doubting Heart	158
The Valley of Achor a Door of			The Little Grave	232
Hope	177		To the Blessed Spirit	273
The Way to be Saved	182			

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

The Deaf Man Cured. By the Rev. D. Moore, M.A.	17
Christian Consistency. By the Rev. W. M. Punshon	41
The Pool of Bethesda. By the Rev. H. Melvill, B.D.	65
The Water of Life. By the Rev. W. W. Champneys, M.A.	89
The Faith of Noah. By the Rev. H. Melvill, B.D.	113
The Effects of Piety on a Nation. By the Rev. W. M. Punshon . . .	137
The Penitent Thief. By the Rev. H. Melvill, B.D.	161
Free, Never-Failing Grace. By the Rev. J. J. West, M.A.	185
The Nature, Power, and Preciousness of the Blood of Christ. By the Rev.	
H. G. Guinness	209
Jehovah Pacified. By the Rev. J. J. West	233
The Christian's Model. By the Rev. J. Cumming, D.D.	277

THE MOTHER'S MAGAZINE,



Sketches and Essays.

HOW TO MAKE HOME HAPPY.

LET us suggest, then, some things which may tend to promote the happiness of home.

1. Each in the home circle must have a benevolent spirit, or have a disposition to make the rest happy. If one be heedless of the wishes of the others, but tenacious of his own gratification, he acts on a selfish principle, which can sunder all human ties. A benevolent spirit will lead to frequent self-denial for others' good, and it is the corner-stone on which the happiness of home must rest.

2. Avoid the positive causes which tend to mar the peace of home. Everything which will be likely to displease, if unnecessary, should be avoided. The happiness of a day may be destroyed by a single word or action, and its repetition may keep a family in constant turmoil. Small things may embitter life. He who would knowingly give unnecessary pain is wanting in human feelings.

3. Each must have a forbearing spirit.

No one that knows himself imagines that he is perfect, even as a social being. He needs the forbearance of others, and he must be willing to extend it to them. To ask perfection in others, when one has only imperfections to give in return, is not a fair exchange. There will often be difference of opinions, but there need be no alienation of feeling. Let the judgment lean to the side of charity, and what charity cannot cover, let forbearance excuse.

4. Be ready to ask forgiveness.

Many are too little to do this. But nothing can so stamp one's character with the seal of true greatness, as a free, open, penitent acknowledgment of a wrong, whenever it has been done. And whenever such spirits are together, harmony cannot be broken, though the house be small.

5. Cultivate an open, communicative spirit.

An open expression of thought and feeling leads to a wider comparison of views, to more intelligent judgments, and to a knowledge of one another, which removes distrust, and forms the only true basis of mutual confidence and sympathy. Minds cannot flow into one another unless they know each other—unless they are open and communicative.

6. Another requisite is the faithful performance of relative duties.

Every social relation involves corresponding duties. Husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, owe to each other respectively the duties of these relations. It is a fundamental law, in all the relationships of society, that they involve reciprocal duties which balance one another. And if a person sustain a relation and neglect its duties, he violates the very principle of harmony in the social system. He disowns his own nature. He is worse than an infidel.

7. Cultivate a relish for useful knowledge.

Some of the family, at least, have leisure. Let them so use it as to increase the common stock of knowledge. If a family dwell only on the routine of daily affairs, or on events of mere local importance, their minds will want vigour and scope. The hour of leisure will drag heavily. Life will pass in a dull monotony. Home will be wanting in attractiveness. It is dangerous to the happiness of a family, if its leading members sink into mental sluggishness. Many a young mind has sought low and vicious excitement abroad for want of proper mental employment at home.

8. Cherish the social affections.

Nothing can supply the want of these. They give to domestic life its bloom and fragrance. Under their influence every burden is light, every employment cheerful, every care sweet. Without them all mutual service is a kind of task-work, and life itself cold and cheerless.

9. Let the love of God dwell and reign in every heart. Let it especially shine out in those who are the heads of the family circle.

10. Let Christ be recognised as present at all times. Let his mind be in all. This will keep all things right.

NAOMI AND RUTH.*

GREAT as is the mother's care and responsibility when her sons are young, these are often increased manifold as they advance in years and enter the world. She may not have had grace and wisdom to bend their wills in infancy, and they grow up self-willed. Or, if not this, they act foolishly from the force of temptation and want of wisdom. Rebekah declared that she was weary of her life because of the daughters of Heth, whom Esau had married without consulting his parents in the choice of a partner for life.

A somewhat similar fate befell Naomi and Elimelech in the days when the Judges ruled; their two sons married two Moabitish women. The parents could not but feel that they were more to blame than their sons in this matter, for they had left the land of their fathers, their kindred and the worship of Jehovah, and removed to the land of their enemies because there was a scarcity of bread. This was surely not the part of faith in the Bethlehemites, and does not seem to have been necessary to the preservation of their lives, for Naomi found Boaz and the rest of the inhabitants of her native city still alive and prospering, on her return from her self-imposed banishment, while she herself was reduced to widowhood, loss of children, and poverty.

These Israelites learned, from sad experience, "that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deut. viii. 3). Naomi complains, "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home empty; why then call ye me Naomi (or pleasant), seeing that the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me.

She went out in easy circumstances, a happy mother and wife: she thought little probably of the effect on herself and her family of constant intercourse with idolators, of separation from the assemblies of the saints, of the loss of the privilege of going up yearly to Shiloh, to worship, and to share in the forgiveness promised every year to those whose sins were borne away on the day of atonement. Perhaps the fault lay rather in her husband than herself; it may have been his will to go, and on that account he may have been cut off in the prime of life, for Naomi was soon left a widow in a strange land. But she still remained there,

* From "Abraham and his Children." By E. Gosse. London: Nisbet & Co.

her sons grew up, and married among the daughters of the land. Possibly, when Elimelech died, his sons were already old enough to be their own masters, and choose to remain where they had formed friendships, and where habit had made them at home.

But the Lord's blessing enriched them not; they married, but the Lord gave them no heirs, and they both died before long, leaving their mother desolate, and their wives widows. Can we fail to see in all this the Lord's disapprobation of the whole proceeding? And is it not a lesson to parents in the present day, who are rushing from the sphere in which they were born, far from the means of grace, from Christian society, from Christian education, from the prospect of forming Christian alliances for their children hereafter, for the sake of enriching themselves, and settling their children in countries where they have no expectation that they will either hear the gospel preached, or see its precepts carried out around them.

Far from wise would be the assertion that it is a wrong thing in itself for Christians to emigrate; but if it be likely to involve such spiritual privations as these, far better would it be for our children to live in poverty in a land where the truth is acknowledged, than to amass all the gold of Australia, if at the price of a good conscience, if our children are to be corrupted by the idolatry of the world, and if they form alliances with the daughters of Heth, or the daughters of Moab.

It is not the part of wisdom to sit down in vain regret about that which cannot be remedied, but to make the best possible use of present opportunities. Naomi must have regretted, as a godly woman, to see her sons bring home Gentile wives; but she did not sit down and make herself miserable; she did not contradict and oppose her daughters-in-law in everything, and make them dislike her. She did the contrary to all this. She adopted them into her heart, and did everything to secure their affections. This we see from the manner in which they both behaved, when the ties of relationship which held them together were loosened. When they found that she was about to return to the land of Judah, they both arose to go with her; and it was not without many entreaties that Orpah was induced to return to her own kindred, while Ruth clave unto her, notwithstanding all her arguments to the contrary.

There are few situations in which a mother can be placed, more difficult, than those of Naomi. In addition to the usual hindrances, which she would feel in the family of her sons, when she ceased to rule in that

family, and had to yield precedence to her sons' wives, she had to walk as a believer in the true God in the company of idolators. This probably was her first sorrow, and she was, evidently, not unsuccessful in bringing them to the acknowledgment of the true God. Orpah at length proves that the conversion had not been effectual, for she went back unto her people, and unto her gods: but we see in Ruth evidences of true allegiance to Jehovah and his people, and fervent affection to her who had probably been at least one means of leading her steps into the way of peace. What an encouragement should this be to those who unhappily have unconverted relatives. If a son marries foolishly one who knows not God, how blessed to become a Naomi to the poor stranger, and win her, if possible, into the ways of God!

THE WELCOME HOME.*

FALSE shame,—the shrinking of guilt from the presence of innocence,—has lost its power over the returning Prodigal. The magnetic attraction of love quickens his step, whilst it deepens his penitence. He has ceased limiting his father's love, by the fear of rejection on account of his sin. But he sees his sin in the light of his father's love, and his tears are the tears of "godly sorrow,"—sorrow that has no pang of bitterness,—the sorrow of the mourner who is about to be comforted,—sorrow on the point of being changed into joy. He felt a sweet conviction, amounting to an assurance, that he should not be expelled, a houseless fugitive, from his father's hospitable roof. The door of home, when he knocked, would be open to him, not closed against him. His expectation was more than realised. He had not even to knock at the door of home for admittance. His fears had been quieted: now his largest hopes were to fall far short of the welcome home he experienced.

"When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him."

How touchingly simple! How truly sublime. There are scenes in creation, scenes of awe and grandeur, scenes of surpassing loveliness and

* From "The Way Home: or the Gospel in the Parable; an Earthly Story with a Heavenly Meaning." By the Rev. C. Bullock, Curate of St. Nicholas, Worcester. London: Wertheim, Macintosh, and Hunt.

beauty, on which the eye delights to feast,—but here is a scene, a revelation of moral loveliness, that excels in interest. “One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.” This is such a touch,—a touch that strikes a responsive chord in every human heart. This is David tenderly longing to receive Absalom. “The soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom” (2 Sam. xiii. 39). A father’s heart is a father’s heart all the world over. Many an old dim eye has shed hot tears, as the parable of the prodigal has been heard, and the thought of some wayward, wicked son, who left him long ago and has not been heard of since, has come to mind. “O Absalom, my son, my son!” Then the prayer is gone up to God, that he would one day bring the wanderer back: and the yearning heart has given its strongest pledge, that forgiveness should even anticipate repentance.

These natural instincts are reflections of his love who implanted them. The Father in heaven, who has created every father on earth, cannot be less loving than they. Let this thought be present with us whilst we make the effort to realise this affecting spectacle of parental love. It is the thought, remember, which supplies us with the key, that gives to the earthly story, its spiritual, its heavenly meaning.

“When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him.” It seems probable his father, in accordance with custom in the East, had retired to the roof of his house. These roofs were flat, and in all cases could be reached by an ascent of stairs from the exterior. The Orientals often ascend to the roof to enjoy a purer air, to secure a wider prospect, or to witness any event which happens in the neighbourhood. They also resort thither for privacy, meditation, and devotion. Here, then, the prodigal’s father was doubtless meditating upon the past. We can imagine how all a father’s recollections and sympathies would gather around the departure and fate of his truant child. A wayward child, who has at the same time abandoned his home and reputation, is not so easily abandoned by his parents. They may try to forget him, seeing that the remembrance of him is painful: but they cannot succeed. In spite of themselves, in moments of retirement, in a dream or vision of the night, the image of their boy will often be presented to their imagination. A thousand circumstances will occur to remind them of the loss they have sustained. They once had a son, but whether he is now in existence or not, they are unconscious:—it may be “some evil beast has devoured him,” and they walk childless upon the earth,—their son indeed dead! Our losses make a deep impression upon us; they occupy our thoughts

more than all our possessions. Such a train of reflections would pass through the father's mind. Perhaps, that communication of sympathy, which often, although we cannot account for it, appears to anticipate coming events, presenting to the eye of the mind a long-absent friend some time previous to his actual introduction to our sight, gave a more anxious tone than usual to his meditations. His eye, influenced by his imagination, turned towards the expanse of country, across which his son had journeyed. He perceives a mere speck in the distant horizon. He has no suspicion that it may be his son: but his gaze fastens upon it. It grows, and the shadow at length presents the outline of a human being. Now there is a strange, unwonted flush upon his countenance: his sight is strained:—"Surely,—it cannot be,—and yet there is something in the gait, the movement, the size, that reminds me of my lost child!" The eye of love is quick of discernment, and as the distance lessens, although still "a great way off," and covered with rags, "his father saw him."

Changed he was—sadly changed. His features bespoke the ravages of self-indulgence, and poverty, and trials. Weak and feeble, barefooted, with tattered garb,—who but a father, would have recognised the youth, who had last been seen in full possession of property and strength, and health, buoyant with expectation, pride, and independence! All those hopes have now been blasted, his ambition extinguished, his projects defeated—annihilated. Sin has made him, what, in the end, it will make any man,—the wreck of his former self. But in that wreck of character and prospects, he is nevertheless an object of interest to his father's heart! When he saw him, he "had compassion on him."

There may be parents, who, under similar circumstances, would begin to meditate upon the kind of reception they should give the wanderer. Remembering the extent and heinousness of his sin, the ingratitude of his course, the waste of his portion, the degradation to which he had reduced himself,—the thought of punishment, or at least, severe discipline, might not seem out of place. He must be met with words of rebuke: he must be reasoned with on the impropriety of his conduct, and the daring acts of defiance, both towards God and man, of which he had been guilty, before he is admitted again into his home. But this is legal mercy—not mercy rejoicing against judgment. It would not, indeed, have been an unwarrantable course of conduct on the father's part. Justice would have commended it, and prudence have dictated it. But there would have been in that case a very imperfect manifestation of

grace. The parable would have failed, in the most important particular. It would no longer have illustrated the text upon which it was founded, "This man receiveth sinners." It would no longer have typified the joy there is in heaven "over one sinner that repenteth." The joy must have been deferred till the effect of the discipline became apparent; and that effect would have been very uncertain. It might have repelled even the penitent, weeping prodigal. Grace, not discipline, is man's necessity. Apostacy cannot be mended by discipline; the affections cannot be constrained by law. Men, who admit this as an indisputable axiom, are very slow to act upon it in their dealings with one another, "We do pray for mercy," but we are not naturally prone to "render the deeds of mercy." "Pay me that thou owest," seems to the creditor a reasonable requirement. To insist upon our rights is far easier than to remit them. There is very little grace in the world; very little disposition to emulate the spirit of one who counts it "more blessed to give than to receive." We need the Divine copy—the example of the Saviour's sacrifice, who gave himself for us—to teach man the lesson of mercy. And we need to have our faith strengthened in the power of love to win the erring!

To this end, the record of the father's reception of his prodigal son may be eminently conducive. We may learn from it, that in dealing with the penitent wrong-doer, it is not the judgment we are to call into exercise; it is not the sentence of condemnation we are to pronounce. There is a time when reproof, or even expostulation, may be out of place, and hinder the reformation we are anxious to secure. It was right the flood-gates of the affections—the avenues of the heart—should be thrown open, when the prodigal, the apostate, stood in the presence of his father, a weeping penitent.

"His father saw him, and had compassion on him." Pity moved apace. His eye affected his heart. The spectacle of his son—his poor son, who had no compassion on himself—moved the father's compassion. When he beheld his misery, he pitied his condition. A parent's heart soon relents and melts into tenderness. Doubtless, when the son recognised his father—through his tears, which accounts for the father's first recognition,—a degree of anxiety would return. Some lingering fear would whisper, "Will not thy father after all enter into judgment with thee? Then, what a miserable story thou hast to tell of thy pilgrimage and adventures!" But the father longs to receive him. Already he has forgiven him. All other thoughts are absorbed in this,—“It is my son, my son, whom I so ardently desired, but scarcely hoped, again to em-

brace." And, behold, the aged parent presses with rapid step to meet the wanderer! "He had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Ran, that he might the more speedily remove his painful fears, and administer comfort and encouragement. So eager is he to clasp to his heart the restored pledge of his affection, that he waits not to hear what his son might have to urge in mitigation of his conduct. He tarries not for the accents of humiliation and mourning. The tears, which flowed down his furrowed cheeks in an unrestrained strain, bepoke at once the penitent. His poverty and wretchedness were alone sufficient to secure a passport to a parent's bosom. It was enough that his child was in want, and that he, as his father, was able to succour him. So he rushes forward with loving impetuosity, and welcomes his child back again to his heart and home, sealing with a kiss of delight the assurance of affection and pardon.

But words cannot give expression to the high-wrought feelings of the earthly parent, rejoicing with tears of joy over the lost one found, the dead alive again. Matthew Henry's comment sums up all that can be said—"His father 'saw him'—there were eyes of mercy; he 'had compassion'—there was a heart of mercy; he 'ran' to meet him—there were feet of mercy; he put his arms round his neck—there were arms of mercy; he 'kissed' him—there were kisses of mercy; he 'said' to him—there were words of mercy; 'bring forth the best robe'—there were deeds of mercy, wonders of mercy—all mercy!"

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST'S SYMPATHY WITH OUR INFIRMITIES.*

THE question then arises—In what way may we regard our Lord as taking our infirmities and bearing our sicknesses? We think the answer will be supplied by the following considerations:—

First, by his assumption of our humanity. He could only come under the obligation to participate in our circumstances by taking up into union with the Godhead the nature that sin and the curse had bowed to the earth. The human nature to which his Godhead stooped was as

* "The Precious Things of God." By Octavius Winslow, D.D. London: Nisbet and Co. 1859.

free from the taint and pollution of sin as his Divinity, and yet was it real humanity. "A body hast thou prepared for me." "He was made sin" (or an offering for sin) "for us, who knew no sin." He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Keep firm hold of this doctrine of your faith, O believer! The shadow of a shade of sin in the human nature of the Son of God would have been eternal destruction to his elect church—fatal to the accomplishment of his sacrifice, and the salvation of his people. We have said that it was real, true, actual humanity. Its mysterious and close union with the Godhead did not alter it, even as there was no essential change in the Godhead when it took up into union the manhood. There was a union—a personal and inseparable union—of the two natures, but no change in either; both retained their peculiar and essential properties. The humanity was blest by its union with the Deity, but not changed, in the least degree, into the essentially Divine. It was filled and enriched with excellent gifts—even the Holy Spirit without measure—but was not in the least degree elevated into an equality with the Divine nature; it retained its own property intact. In taking upon him the form of a servant, Christ did not abdicate the form of God. He, indeed, emptied himself, and made himself of no reputation, and was reputed a man, and a very poor and despised man, too; yet he never ceased to be God. The glory of his Godhead was indeed enshrouded, but not extinguished; it was obscured, but not lost. Our infirmities shaded the lustre of the Sun, but the Sun behind those infirmities shone with undimmed and undiminishable splendour. "He could not have been a sufficient Mediator had he ceased to be God; and he had ceased to be God had he lost any one perfection proper to the Divine nature; and losing none, he lost not this of unchangeableness, which is none of the meanest belonging to the Deity. Why, by this union with the Divine nature, should he lose this any more than he lost his Omniscience, which he discovered by his knowledge of the thoughts of men; or his mercy, which he manifested to the height in the time of his suffering? That is truly a change when a thing ceaseth to be what it was before. This was not in Christ. He assumed our nature without laying aside his own. When the soul is united to the body, doth it lose any of those perfections that are proper to its nature? Is there any change either in the substance or qualities of it? No; but it makes a change in the body, and of a dull lump it makes a living mass, conveys vigour and strength to it, and by its power quickens it to sense and motion. So did the Divine nature and the human remain entire;

there was no change of the one into the other, as Christ by a miracle changed water into wine, or men by art change sand or ashes into glass. And when he prays for the glory he had with God before the world was, he prays that a glory he had in his Deity might shine forth in his person as Mediator, and be evidenced in that height and splendour suitable to his dignity, which had been so lately darkened by his abasement; that, as he had appeared to be the Son of Man in the infirmity of the flesh, he might appear to be the Son of God in the glory of his person, that he might appear to be the Son of God and the Son of Man in one person."

But his assumption of our humanity—"the Word made *flesh*"—was only a part of his participation with our infirmities—the physical infirmities of our nature. The body he took was but the vehicle by which he acted. He approached yet closer to the actual bearing when he was made under the curse, and took upon him our sins. As sin and the curse which followed are the sources of all our infirmities—mental, moral, and physical—so, by becoming a sin-offering for the one, and coming under the other, he "himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." By this act of bearing our sins, he more truly and strictly took our infirmities than though he had actually sinned as we have sinned. Our great, our grand, our chief infirmity is—**SIN**! This is the parent, and root, and spring of all infirmity. Jesus took our sins: "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." Could language be stronger? Not merely the punishment for sin, but sin itself was laid upon him!—yet was he "without sin." And thus it was our blessed Lord "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." And now trace his own actual, personal participation in our infirmities. Jesus knew what it was to be weary; to hunger and thirst; to be homeless and friendless; to be maligned, traduced, slandered; to be wounded by foes; to be deserted by friends; to be taunted by men; to be tempted by Satan; to be forsaken by God. Was not this a taking upon him our infirmities? Did not this include them all? What is thine infirmity, O child of God? Is it sin?—Jesus bore it. Is it sickness?—Jesus carried it. Is it a weak, infirm, frail body?—Jesus assumed it. Is it loneliness?—Jesus lived much in solitude. Is it irritability, impatience, fretfulness, nervousness?—Jesus bore the sin and curse from whence this springs. Is it wounded love, betrayed confidence, disappointed friendship?—Jesus trod this shaded path before you. Is it poverty, straitened

circumstances, humiliating dependence?—Jesus too was poor, and, succoured by the charities of those who ministered of their substance to his wants, was subjected to this humiliation. Are you bereaved?—keenly did Jesus feel this sorrow, when his tears fell fast and thick upon the grave of his friend at Bethany. Tell me, then, have you an infirmity which your Lord did not bear before you? “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”

How illustriously did Christ exhibit this assumption of, and sympathy with, our infirmities when he was on earth! Take a general survey. He healed the sick; restored sight to the blind; made the lame to walk; the deaf to hear; and lifted up those that were bowed down. Nor this only. He restored reason to its throne; ejected demons from their usurped dominion of the soul; chased the cloud of sadness from the spirit, and made the widow's heart to sing for joy. How beautiful and artless the narrative—how graphic and life-like the description! “When even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Pause, and contemplate the scene—it is full of poetry and power. It is twilight, or, as Mark narrates, “at even when the sun did set.” All nature is in harmony with the touching spectacle. The sun has almost finished his daily course, his burning wheels reposing upon the utmost verge of the sky. The last smile of day yet lingers, gilding with liquid gold the lofty dome of the Temple, and tipping with streaming silver the mountain's brow and the leafy spires of the grove. All is hushed, as if Nature itself were dead. The confused din of the tumultuous city has ceased, and the toil-worn labourer rests from his employ. The weary winds forget to blow; the gentle gales have fanned themselves to rest; not a wavelet breaks the smooth surface of the lake. The aspen ceases to quiver, and echo herself slumbers. This is the hour and this the scene Jesus has chosen for his works of benevolence and power. Holy and precious the instruction! Is it, beloved, the twilight of life with those on whose behalf we would implore the compassion and help of the Saviour? Is the sun of human existence just setting, his last, his latest rays falling upon the world's gray landscape, now receding into the deep shades of night? Hear you their plaintive cry, “Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of evening are stretched out?” Take heart, my brother! The sun has not yet gone down; night's darkness

has not yet come; it is not too late to bring in faith and hope the objects of your sympathy and love to Jesus. It was "at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and he healed them." What Jesus then was he is now, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Despair not, then, of their salvation. Lay them down at his feet, cast them upon his heart, take hold of his robe, nor let him go until he speaks the word, and lo! "at evening-time it shall be light." Blessed Saviour! The world's din is hushed—the thick shades of evening are gathering over life's landscape; the sun of human probation touches the horizon; the long, dark night of eternity approaches; the all-important crisis has arrived; one look, one word, one touch from thee, and there shall be healing, there shall be light, there shall be life!

How precious, then, the sympathy of Christ with human infirmity! His fitness thus to sympathise is portrayed by the apostle as inspiration alone could depict it—"We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest, taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." Behold your Lord's fitness to share and sympathise with all your infirmities! He was "encompassed with infirmity." He knew what hunger and thirst were; he knew what labour and fatigue were; he knew what languor and sleeplessness were; he knew what pain and suffering were; he knew what spiritual depression and mental darkness were; he knew what the fiery darts of temptation were; he knew what the weight, and curse, and sorrow of sin were; he knew what the assaults of the world, the malignity of the foes, the fickleness of friends, the distrust and woundings of brethren were; he knew what it was to be denied by one disciple, to be betrayed by another, and to be forsaken by all!

Child of God! what more shall Christ endure, what ruder path shall he tread, what deeper sorrow shall he experience, what bitterer cup shall he drink, what darker cloud shall he penetrate, what infirmities more human, more severe, more humiliating, shall he take, in order to be touched with the feeling of yours? Will not this suffice to wake your heart to love, to win your mind to confidence, to inspire your

soul with hope, to replenish your spirit with joy, and tune your lips with praise—that Christ's sympathy, so human yet divine, all so tender, all so clinging, all so personal, entwines around your every infirmity—bodily, mental, spiritual—and makes it all his own ?

BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.

BY THE REV. H. W. BEECHER.

"As ye have opportunity, do good unto all men," saith the command, "especially unto them who are of the household of faith;" but that *especially* was dead long ago; for, when spoken, the household of faith was outcast. Men that became Christians, in that day, forsook houses, and brethren, and sisters, and fathers, and mothers, and wives, and children, and lands; and were peculiar objects of sympathy and kindness, because faith brought persecution. It was, therefore, necessary to say, "As ye have opportunity, do good unto all men;" but as they need sympathy and kind treatment more than anybody else—"especially unto those who are of the household of faith." But now, in the revolution of affairs, religion is at the top, and heathenism is at the bottom; and it is a spirit of mean sectarianism that leads men to say, "I will trade with those who are of my own denomination—with those who are Christians—and not with people of the world." They take that word "*especially*," which, when spoken, came as the reaching out of God's rosy hand of mercy, and change it into the iron hand of sectarian exclusiveness and religious selfishness !

Wherever a man, whether he be connected with you or not, is in trouble, he becomes, by trouble, baptized into brotherhood with you. So strong is this command, that if a man is your enemy, and is in trouble, you are to help him. If he is a stranger, and his trouble is brought within your knowledge, help him. If he is a foreigner, and you are a native, and he is in trouble, help him. Even if he is a black man, and you are a white man, and he is in trouble—trouble washes all skins alike—help him !

These deeds of kindness must not be occasional and as enforced duties; they must be the spontaneous acts of an abiding disposition of Christian love. They must grow out of you as grass grows out of the

summer-warmed ground. You do not have to coax grass to grow; you cannot coax it not to grow. There is not a nook or corner of the earth which receives the warmth of the sun, so barren that grass does not spring up in it from its love of growing. And the human heart should be filled to such a degree with the spirit of Christ, that as, wherever the sun carries itself, it brings forth leaves, flowers, and fruits, and lights up the dew-drops, and the rain-drops, and paints the gorgeous bows upon crests of retreating storms, and clothes everything in the morning with jewels,—so likewise your luminous soul shall flush all things with good cheer, kindle comfort, and diffuse light and joy upon men's affairs. And the lowest should be helped first, and the most needy should be helped most.

A man who wraps himself up in worldly exclusiveness; who carries his sharp face and cold lips into his own affairs, without one sympathetic thought for the affairs of other men, who are tossed upon the waves of the sea of life, as ships are tossed upon the waves of the ocean—a million baptisms, a million visionary conversions, a million ordinations would not bring within sounding distance of a Christian life!

But I go further. In judging of men, and dealing with them, we should recognise the constitutional differences of mind which exists among them, and should not seek to compel all minds as if they were like our own. No man that only reads books knows anything about human nature. But there is not a man that goes out into human life, and mingles with men, and is obliged to use them, or resist them, or lead them by the force of motives, who does not know that men are endlessly different in specific dispositions, though generically alike. Alike at the centre, but unlike at the surface. So unlike that the same motives do not fall on different men with similar result; that they do not see alike, feel alike, act alike, or understand each other's feelings.

Some men, like pyramids in the sand, are broad in that part which stands upon the earth, and small in that part which looks upward. You cannot touch them with abstractions and motives that reach their higher nature. You may develope and educate their higher nature, and you should do so; but, for the present, you must employ what there is in them.

Your experience tells you that some men are placid and tranquil—because they are phlegmatic; they cannot be easily excited; there is no danger of over-pungency toward them; they are in their nature like oxen, that will bear the goad and whip with patient toughness: while

others are exquisitely sensitive, like a fiery Arab steed, that cannot even bear to have the whip raised above it, and whom one stroke of the lash would make crazy with rage and excitement.

There are some men whose thinking powers are preponderant. They think as easily as a bird flies; but when they would apply their thoughts to practical things, they are like birds that try to walk, and only hop, making little progress, and that with fitful awkwardness. There are others that think very little, but feel a great deal. Their great hearts, filled with emotions, are like full reservoirs or swollen streams. Their life proceeds from feeling.

There are still others that have not much power of thought nor of feeling, but great passional power. Then these are those who are characterised by great energy—who have rude, quartz crushing, pile-driving natures.

It is the supremest conceit for one to assume his own disposition and temperament as the measure of other men, judging their conduct not by the influences which the actor felt, but by the motives which the critic would have felt.

Here is a man whose conscience is excessive. It is his tyrant, and he makes it the despot of everybody else. He says, "I require of myself the most exact fulfilment of every obligation; of course it is right to require the same of my fellow-men." But right and wrong are relative to each man's nature, circumstances, education, and very organisation. Some things are always right, and right to all men; and some things are wrong always, and to all men. But in the fruitful play of common life there are thousands of places where the difficulty is to determine what is right. Each man must determine by his own moral sense, but for himself, and not for others.

HOME.

I have a home above,
 From sin and sorrow free;
 A mansion which eternal love
 Design'd and form'd for me.
 My Father's gracious hand
 Has built this sweet abode;
 From everlasting it was plann'd
 My dwelling place with God.
 My Saviour's precious blood,
 Has made my title sure;
 He pass'd through death's dark raging flood,
 To make my rest secure.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE DEAF MAN CURED.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 18, 1859,

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE M.A.

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him."—Mark vii. 32.

VERY striking were those words we read just now, in which taking up the language of the prophet Isaiah, the holy Saviour declares for what purpose he had come into the world. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And this was his life's work. He was in the highest sense of those words what our Collect of to-day calls St. Luke the Evangelist, a physician of the soul, yet not of the soul only. As preparatory for what he would do for the soul no doubt, and as emblematical of what he would do it might be, yet still he did work many mighty miracles on the bodies of men, insomuch, that at the close of the narrative from which we are about to discourse to you, we are told that the multitude were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

The chief points calling for notice in this miracle will be found, first, in the manner of the afflicted man's introduction to our Lord; and, secondly, in the method and circumstances of his cure.

The Mother's Magazine. January, 1860.

I. Consider first the man's introduction to Jesus. He is described as deaf and having an impediment in his speech; or as some prefer to render it, totally dumb. The word probably will not admit of so strong a rendering; however, it may come to the same thing practically, the literal expression being, that the man made nothing but babbling sounds, as distinguished from any intelligible or articulate words. Now, in contemplating a fellow-creature in such sad case, the thought may well occur how little are we affected by our common mercies! How little think we of such blessings as preserved senses, unshattered reason, the links unbroken which connect us with the outer world, and all the faculties unimpaired which fit us for the activities of life. And, though of all such privations, the gift of sight is perhaps the one we should least like to have taken away, though imagination sickens at the idea of being surrounded by an ever during dark, and cut off from the cheerful ways of men, yet considered in its effects on moral happiness, it may be questioned whether the calamity of the man before us was not greater; whether blindness be not a less to be deplored evil than the total loss of hearing and of speech. For this calamity, unalleviated, and existing from birth, shuts up the soul of the sufferer in a perpetual prison house. He has no outlet for communion with his kind; he has no medium for the interchange of sentiment or emotion, until wearied with treading for ever the same cycle of never-extending and never-varied thought, he sinks into a condition of utter mindlessness—God's image on a dark cloud, a sad wreck of humbled and defaced humanity. It has been among the glorious achievements of a scientific philanthropy in our own day to have discovered means for abating somewhat the deep misery of this infliction. That which, in our Lord's time, was the incurable part of the malady, nay, which in itself, I suppose, is the incurable part still, namely, the deafness, has of late, as you know, been partially made up to the sufferer, by means of a beautifully constructed and expressive system of signs, throwing open to him in considerable degree the delights of social intercourse, enabling him to receive amusement and instruction from books, and thus permitting him, in common with other immortal spirits, to attain to a knowledge of salvation and the promised joys of the world to come. To the afflicted man in our text, however, such topics must have been as strange as to the most uncivilized of human kind. The most untutored of the savage tribes may have a creed; he may be instructed in the rude traditions of his father; he may reason on the aspects of nature and providence, and discourse on them, and as mind strikes on mind, and thought on thought, there will be emitted sparks of pure truth, such as though overlaid and disturbed by after devices are found to be at the foundation of heathen theologies to this day. But the deaf man in gospel times could not attain even to so much knowledge as this. Whether

he had a soul or not, whether there was a God or not, whether death would be the end of being or not—if he knew this he could give no evidence of it to his distressed friends. They could neither sign to him, nor he to them. So they bring him to Jesus. Brethren, is there not some light thrown by this fact on the part which our friends are permitted to perform for us in reference to the more helpless and hopeless forms of spiritual malady. Our Lord's miracles, we know, are typical, not in themselves only, but in the moral conditions necessary to their performance. Faith in his power to heal was as essential to a cure then, as faith in his power to forgive is essential to a pardon now. But faith in the immediate subject of the bodily cure was not always possible. The blessing must be granted, as we see it often was granted to the faith of others; as in the case of Jarius' daughter, at the point to die for instance, or of the lunatic that cast himself oftentimes into the fire and oftentimes into the water, or of the paralytic let down in his bed through the roof of the house; all instances, in which, if friends had been faithless or if friends had been uncaring, the blessing, be it temporal or be it spiritual, must as far as we can see have been lost. What does this prove but that there are no men whose case is so bad and hopeless as that we must not try to convert them, but rather in exact proportion to the hopelessness of a man's moral condition God devolves upon each of us the obligation to become our brother's keeper. We are to pray for none so earnestly as for those who through the inveteracy of their soul's malady cannot pray for themselves. For the spiritually deaf, who can hear all sounds but gospel sounds; for the spiritually dumb, who can speak upon all subjects but upon the wonderful works of God; for the spiritually blind, who can see everything but the things belonging to their peace, for the withered, and impotent, and paralytic, in whom one half of the sentient mind is dead, having in their spiritual part no feeling whatever, withered, blighted souls, whom nothing rouses, and nothing moves. And very often praying, for them is the only thing you can do. Speaking to them is of no use, for they have no ear for spiritual sounds. As with the man in the text, there is no medium of communication between you. All you can do is to bring them to Christ, to Christ for wisdom, to Christ for righteousness, to Christ for sanctification, to Christ for redemption. "And they bring him to Jesus, beseeching him to put his hands upon him." And on this principle it is we bring our children to Christ in holy baptism. Powerless as the man before us to ask anything of themselves, we beseech Christ to put his hands upon them and to bless them, to bless them with spiritual blessings, with a new principle, with a new hope, with a baptism with him unto death, and with a resurrection through him to newness of life. And these things we look for as God's bestowment in honour of his own ordinance, and in answer to

his people's prayers. They are heaven's grants to a large faith. As parents, we must desire for our children an interest in Christ; but as an infant he cannot ask and cannot hear, so that we may almost say as the friends of this poor man said—"Lord, we bring unto thee one that is deaf, and hath an impediment in his speech."

II. But I pass to our second portion, to observe some peculiarities connected with the method of this afflicted man's cure. "And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, be opened." Why were the methods used by our Lord in working his miracles so diverse one from another? Why were some performed in private and some in a crowd, some by contact with the person, and some by the mere utterance of a word; some by the instantaneous exercise of Divine power, and some by lengthened processes, requiring the concurrence of those who were to be benefitted? That these differences could proceed from no limitation or restriction of power in our Lord himself, and that the means, whether instant or protracted, simple or complicated, had no connection with the miracle but such as our Lord himself chose to give them, must be apparent on the slightest consideration. The only account therefore to be given of these variations is, that they had reference either to something in the moral circumstances of the sufferer, or to some effect to be produced in the mind of the bystanders, or it might be, to some lesson of practical instruction which through these typical healings might be conveyed to believers to the end of time. Especially are we to suppose that in each case of the wrought miracle there was in the method chosen some express adaptation to the circumstances of the person benefitted—the state of his affections towards God, and his susceptibility to become a subject of the spiritual kingdom. For to this end we are sure our Divine Lord worked always. Indeed the benefit had been no benefit otherwise. To what purpose had been the recovery of sight to a man only to look on the face of this outer world, while his soul was left to grope its way through mists of an everlasting blindness? What profit had been the loosing of the tongue to a man while the only use he would make of it would be to talk of vanity and speak lies, or chant in the world of spirits the loud anthems of despair? No; in all cases the bodily healing was to make way for the spiritual; and whether of the lame, of the blind, of the maimed, or the rising dead, the character under which Christ was loved, was as the great restorer and physician of souls. How then does this wise physician proceed in this case? Why, first we are told he took the man aside from the multitude, a similar method with that adopted in the case of the blind man of Bethsaida, he took him by the hand and led him out of the town.

The instances seem to suggest that there are some persons, who, in order to their learning holy lessons must be withdrawn from the world for a season. They cannot have their ears effectually opened in a crowd—not even in a crowded church. They must be forced into retirement, they must have communings with God on a sick bed; bereavement and deep sorrow must make a solitude for them. Anything Jesus might say to them while the bustle and stir of life was upon them, whilst its feverish excitements were drawing them hither and thither, would make no impression. They must come by themselves, apart, be taken aside from the multitude. On coming to some retired place, however, our Lord proceeds to the miracle, but still observe by a gradual process. He puts his fingers into the man's ears, then spits, and with the moistened finger touches his tongue. As to the reasons for the choice of these means, in preference to any other, it does not seem necessary to go further than the circumstances of the man himself. Questions he could not answer; verbal directions he could not understand; it was only by visible and sensible applications to the organs affected, that he could be made to perceive what was going on, or could connect Jesus with the authorship of his cure. All that we gather is, that the case was one in which it would not be well that the blessing to be bestowed should be instantaneous—that it was needful that time should be given for consideration of what all those processes were to lead to—that faith should be exercised, disciplined, taught to look up, expecting to receive something, and that the soul before coming into that which would be to it as a new world, should know who that being was to whom it must dedicate all its restored faculties and powers. And it is certain, brethren, that the Great Healer has recourse to like protracted methods now. The ears of the deaf must be unstopped before the tongue of the dumb can sing. The heart must believe unto righteousness, before with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. But, then, how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear who are born deaf? Deaf to the calls of mercy; deaf to the alarms of danger; deaf to the warning of conscience; deaf to the voice of the Son of God. Must there not, I say, be an opening of the ears first? Must not the finger of Jesus be put into them, making a passage through, so that his word may reach the heart. Brethren, let us all pray for unstopped ears. It is for our life the prophet tells us—"Hear, and your souls shall live." Oh, how far is he on the way heavenward who has an ear ever open to the whisperings of the Divine Spirit!—who in prayer, in ordinances, in hearing the word, or reading the word, can always bring himself to that posture of mind in which he can say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Such a one has passed from death unto life, the bonds of the grave can hold him no longer. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming,

and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear shall live."

"And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened." He looked up to heaven; so at the grave of Lazarus he lifted up his eyes. On the deep mystery of our Lord's prayers, as a great fact of his incarnation I have touched before. They were as much prayers as yours or mine are prayers—and in connection with his miracles were petitions, not for himself, that he might be able to work them, but for the people that they might be able to receive them, that the benefit might not be lost to them through the want of those moral dispositions, faith and love, without which he could not, according to the stipulations of the everlasting covenant, have performed any wonderful work. The same view gives a reality to his continued intercession for us at the throne of God. Christ does not pray for anything relating to his own work—for his blood that it may cleanse, for his righteousness that it may justify, for his pardons and acquittals, that they may be endorsed and owned of God—these are among heaven's immutable things. What he does pray for is the removal of those hindrances in our hearts which prevent the free flowing of his mercy towards us, for the triumphs of his grace over all our unbelief and worldliness, for the unclosed ear that the voice of the charmer may pierce through, for the loosened tongue that it may magnify the grace of God.

"And he sighed." Again our thoughts revert to Bethany, where, just before working the miracle it is said, he "groaned in spirit and was troubled." We may see many reasons for the distress of soul on the part of the Holy Saviour. He sighed over the spectacle before him as evidence of the suffering and sorrow of our race; he sighed over it as a mournful defacement and distortion of God's moral image; but he sighed most of all over the stubborn unbelief, that miserable infidelity of the heart, the one solitary obstacle in the whole universe of God, to the instantaneous wiping of all tears from off all faces, and the saving of every soul of man. Yes, brethren, this last it was that wrung these bitter sorrows from the Saviour's heart. He could bear the scourge, disregard the mockery, endure the cross, despise the shame; that which next to the hidden face of God, rent his soul most was, to be obliged to say continually, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." "Will not come"—other barrier there is none; other limitation to my Omnipotence there is none; be it for eyes to see, be it for tongue to speak, be it for heart to pray, be it for a mansion, a crown, a seat near the eternal throne—I can give you all these if you will come, and no power in heaven or earth can give you these if you will not come. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have

gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

"And he said unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened." It is observable, that in this, as in some other passages, St. Mark has preserved for us the identical expression of our Lord in the language in which he commonly spoke, a language, you will all remember, differing from that in which any of the evangelical narratives are penned. I mention this, because it enables me to put you on your guard against a dangerous use made of the fact by some modern latitudinarians, who tell us, that because we have not our Lord's own words anywhere recorded, but only Matthew's Hebrew, or Mark's Greek for them, we need not adhere to the words very closely, or interpret them too literally; but as in the case of the doctrine of the eternal punishment, we, for instance, may suppose a severe protracted retribution to be all that is intended by everlasting. Brethren, it seems hardly necessary to supply you with an answer to this wretched sophistry, an answer which lies in the patent fact, that whatever might be the language the Evangelists wrote in, it was inspired language, so inspired as to represent with strictest truth Christ's own words, and, therefore, to abridge these words, distort them, twist them into anything or nothing, as at a German bidding, and your soul's infinite, hazard you may and will, that solemn word still remains, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

"Ephphatha, Be opened." Here the Almighty power of God speaks. The taking him aside, the touching of the ear, the spitting and moistening of the tongue, the eye raised heavenwards, and the deep sigh were all the human preparations; the man's heart was getting ready, the grace of Jesus making way for the demonstration of his power, the Spirit of God was moving upon the face of a dark soul before the irresistible word should go forth, "Let there be light," and as irresistible was the word of Jesus to this poor sufferer, for it was the same word; so that it was no sooner uttered than straightway the man's ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

Our profit in the incidents we have been considering will be found in seeing how entirely our soul's health and life are in the hands of Christ. Are you but now beginning to feel something of your spiritual maladies; made to perceive that efforts are being made for your soul, feeling that under the awakening power of gospel ministration that some unknown blessing there is that might be yours, which friends are desiring should be yours, and which, if there be no moral unwillingness on your part, shall be yours? This is the gracious providence of God bringing you to Jesus. Friends, though you, in your

deafness cannot hear them beseeching him to lay the hand of his grace upon you. Are you less drawn into the world than you were? less impatient of being alone, and left to the solitude of your own thoughts? Does the word preached seem to be something more than a succession of unmeaning sounds, so that where all was unintelligible once, you find here a little and there a little which seems expressly meant for you? This is Jesus taking you aside from the multitude, withdrawing you from the world, forcing you into a habit of serious thought, putting his finger into the ear of your soul to let you catch a few gospel sounds first, so that ravished with the sweet music, you may give him no rest till your whole deafness is taken away, and you may hear all the words of this life. Have you heard the glad tidings in all their abounding fulness? so heard as to believe, so heard as to rejoice, so heard as to run from neighbour to neighbour, like the men of Sychar, exclaiming, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ the Saviour of the world." This, brethren, I need not tell you is the last stage of the miracle, this is the mighty power of God, the diseased soul made whole in all its faculties and powers, the voice of the Omnipotent saying to the closed eyes, the closed ears, the closed understanding, the closed heart, "Ephphatha, Be opened, receive the grace of life; make room for a Saviour's love, unseal each well-spring of gratitude, and joy, and hope, and peace, and be filled with all the fulness of God."

WALKING CIRCUMSPECTLY.

"SEE, then, that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise." Eph. v. 15. Religion is often represented under the idea of a journey. The figure teaches us that the godly are the subjects of spiritual life. The dead cannot walk. They remain motionless amidst all the activity going on around them. The natural state of man is one of spiritual death. He has no true faith in God, no sincere love to this glorious Being, no relish for spiritual things; hence he remains indifferent to the claims of God. But when he is born again, when the Holy Spirit breathes upon him, when he is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, then he begins to live, and his soul moves towards God, and he begins to obey his laws, to seek his glory, to walk in the way of his commandments. The apostle says of Christians, "And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." Dead souls in the new birth are raised out of the grave of sin, and they commence their journey towards the heavenly Canaan. Happy moment! Now they begin to live to purpose, for they begin to live to God, for eternity, for heaven. The way in which these travellers are to walk is prescribed by their infallible guide. He has given them a map of the narrow way which leads to eternal life. They must not walk according to the opinions of the world, the dim light of their corrupt reason, the inclinations of their sinful minds, but according to the plain, positive, imperative declarations, instructions, wise counsels of the word of God. The travellers must remember the words of the Psalmist, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." This light from the glorious Sun of truth discovers the evils we must try to avoid, the precepts we must obey, and the excellences we must cultivate. This is a sure guide in every temptation, affliction, and difficulty. This is put into our hands by one who is deeply interested in our welfare, whose eyes sees the right path every step of our way, and who has a perfect right to speak to us with authority. He is truly wise who resolves to trust this guide, to take his counsel, to give heed to all his warnings. This walk to heaven requires perseverance, effort, patience, earnestness, constant care.

"See, then, that ye walk circumspectly," i.e., carefully, anxiously,

thoughtfully, lest you fall into sin, yield to any temptation, deviate from the right course. The way of obedience to God is a narrow way, and without care we shall get out of it, and walk in the broad way of sin. Christians must not walk like the people of the world, who indulge in sin, who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, who mind earthly things,—they must not be as foolish as they are. They pursue the solemn journey of life without proper thought, they are careless, and reckless of consequences. They live merely for time, they walk by sense, they live under the dominion of an evil nature.—Rom. vii. 5. Christians are renewed in the spirit of their minds, they are taught of God, they are the children of a King, and must walk worthy of their character, relationship, high destiny. The apostle saw the importance of all Christians walking circumspectly in the way to heaven. There are many powerful reasons why they should do this. There is the glorious country to which they are going. Heaven is represented in the Scriptures as a very glorious land. This is a country where there is no sin, no temptation, and no sorrow. The society is glorious; the occupations glorious; the scenes are glorious. This is the palace of the Prince of Peace. This is an eternal Paradise. This is the metropolis of the universe. This is the inheritance of the saints. This is a good land. Hence, how melancholy the condition of those who come short of it.—Heb. iv. 1. The travellers have need to walk circumspectly because of the temptations which beset them, the numerous observers who are looking on, and the influence of their example upon others. There are many snares in the narrow way, laid by the devil to entrap the unwary. He is a skilful, vigilant, experienced fowler, and all who would keep out of his way had need to watch, “Lest Satan should get an advantage over you; for we are not ignorant of his devices.” He tries hard to get an advantage over us, and he is sure to succeed, if we do not open our eyes and walk circumspectly. Many observe how we pursue our journey, and it is wise to pray, “Lead me in a plain path, because of my observers.” The influence of our example upon others is most important. Suppose we break the Sabbath, are dishonest, impure, trifling, inconsistent, careless, how sad the influence upon others. How we shall strengthen the wicked in their evil course, and discourage the righteous.—Matt. v. 16. The wise see and feel the importance of

walking circumspectly. The Saviour has left us an example to follow. Life is short. God has converted us that we may show forth his praise. He has commanded us to walk carefully, and obedience will secure our happiness.

Now, what are the means Christians should employ for this important purpose? They should often consult their guide, they should cherish vital religion in the heart, they should listen to the voice of conscience, they should resist temptation to evil, they should keep the glorious prize in view, they should live on the fulness of Christ by faith, and seek help from heaven. God has given us a sure, constant, faithful, accessible, suitable guide, and he requires us to give heed to its counsels.—Psa. i. 2, 3. The travellers must cherish a vigorous faith in revealed truth, supreme love to God, godly fear, sincerity of heart, an earnest mind. The guide says, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” This fountain of our actions must be kept pure. God is able and willing to help us; therefore, let us cry, “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.” This walking circumspectly in the closet, in the family, in the church, in the furnace, and in the world, is the duty of all Christians. The Scriptures give us examples of careful walking with God. There is the example of Joseph, Samuel, Daniel, Noah, Paul, and others. Such a holy walk is a proof of true wisdom, for it is pleasing to God, it helps us in our progress towards heaven, it is a noble example, it promotes our happiness, and prepares us for the coming of Christ. “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.” He has peace with God, peace in heaven, peace for ever. Enoch has peace in heaven. Daniel has peace in heaven. Stephen has peace in heaven. God is able to make us wise, and he encourages us to look to him.—James i.

POWER OF TRUE RELIGION.

BROOMFIELD visit has confirmed me in every sentiment I have drawn from the Scriptures; I saw them realised in those exalted Christian characters with whom I conversed. The two Mrs. Mores were there. Mrs. Hannah More, who is an authoress, and possesses more infor-

mation than almost any woman I ever heard of, has such sweet humility and urbanity of manner, that I felt drawn to love still more than to admire her. I sat and talked with her on Sabbath evening about schools, &c., with as much ease as I could have done with you. What a striking proof is this of the power of religion—to be humble when one is esteemed, admired, and caressed by all who are most likely to appreciate true excellence and worth of every kind! The style of conversation was remarkably instructive and useful. The subjects chiefly discussed were historical facts, which were blended with pious remarks, and proved that those who held the conversation were conversant with a higher standard of morals than those which historians dwell and expatiate upon.

There was a serenity and cheerfulness reigning in every countenance, which proved that “religion’s ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” Poor Mrs. H. More was very unwell; but the patience with which she bore her sufferings, and the meek expression of her eyes, proved that she knew that the hand who sent it did all things well. Her complaint being an inflammation on the lungs, rendered it quite painful to utter a single word at times. Her sister’s anxiety for her was painted in every look and action. I had also the privilege of seeing good Mr. Simeon for two hours; his countenance is full of animation and kindness; and he unites in a wonderful degree zeal and discretion, warm love for Christ, his cause, and people, with a great degree of wisdom; and, by his excellent conduct, puts to shame and silence those who would misrepresent the conduct of Christians. He has actually in a great degree lived down prejudice, and has been instrumental in doing more good than almost any person I have known.

The next delightful character I conversed with was Mr. Babington, member for Leicester; a man whose whole soul seems to be in religion, and possessing such sweetness and benevolence of character, that he wins the affections immediately. I was pleased to find that he greatly approved of making an open profession of our sentiments with meekness and love, showing that we do not wish to differ, excepting where conscience requires us to do so. I can affirm that it was the sentiment of all, and they seemed to be wise people, that we must differ from those around us; but it is right for young persons to use great caution, and proceed gradually where authority

interferes. Mr. B. said, "Get well established in your principles, and then show you are not ashamed of avowing them." I was struck with wonder at the display of mind which I discovered in persons of very different characters and dispositions. Everything they said convinced me more and more that vital Christianity expands all the powers of the mind, and enlarges and gives a right direction to all the affections of the heart.

THE WIFE'S CROSS.

THE Christian experiences related without premeditation at a prayer-meeting have often a more powerful effect than the most elaborate discourses, delivered with all the graces of both rhetoric and elocution.

The writer's mind was much affected a short time back by the following recital at a social meeting.

In a port town, not many miles from Boston, reside the family of a sea-captain, who, though an excellent husband, an upright and worthy citizen, could not say with a free conscience that he felt a personal interest in the religion of Christ.

For a period of eight or nine years his wife had seen the necessity of speaking to him on this important matter, but could never get the moral courage to open her mind to him on the subject in the way she wished. Every time that he went on a voyage, or that gales of wind would remind her of the dangers to which he was exposed, she would upbraid herself with neglect of duty, and resolve with God's help to comply with the calls of her conscience as soon as he returned.

Again and again those promises were made and broken, till the spirits of the lady became very much depressed by reason of the load she bore upon her mind continually, both while her husband was present, enjoying the comforts of the family circle, or away at sea, buffeting the waves for "the bread that perisheth."

A few months ago another opportunity was afforded this affectionate wife to unburden her heart. Her partner returned in high health and spirits, having made a quick and prosperous voyage, with cheering prospects of future employment. A few days passed, and the vessel was again laden and about to sail. It was the stormy season

of the year. Equinoctial gales were of course to be expected, and the wife observed or fancied a degree of nervousness about the captain which was very unusual.

The hour for his departure was at hand. It was evening, and early on the morrow he proposed to sail. Again the wife's heart smote her, and her vows came up before her in painful array. She retired to her chamber, and poured out her soul in earnest prayer. She begged for strength. She entreated the Lord to give her courage. She implored him to be with her in this effort she was about to make for the conversion of her husband's soul. She confessed her shortcomings and omissions hitherto, and in agony of mind besought her heavenly Father's forgiveness for opportunities lost.

She then repaired to the room where her husband was sitting, examining his papers preparatory to the voyage. Putting out the light, for she felt she could not speak to him face to face, she cast herself upon her knees, and then in the presence of the Great Invisible, before whom all hearts are open, and with whom light and darkness are as one, she poured out a heart-rending prayer, in which, while she blessed God for having united her to such a man, and given her so happy a home, and all the comforts essential to an earthly well-being, she mourned over the position in which her beloved husband stood before his Maker, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and without a well-grounded hope of mercy when summoned before the bar of a pure and righteous Judge.

She arose, and threw herself into the arms of her astonished, but now deeply affected companion, whose cheeks were wet with tears.

"Why"—said he, with choked utterance. "What is this for? What have I done?"

She then told him what she had suffered on his account; how often she had determined to speak to him about his soul, but hitherto could not, and now she entreated him then and there to seek his peace with God.

The captain knelt down and endeavoured to pray; but though affected, they were nature's tears; he could not realize what his wife had urged upon him.

Next day he was to sail, and when the morning came, it was a time to be remembered. Such a separation had not been witnessed under that roof before. He could not say that his sins were par-

done; but faithfully did he promise to seek for the gift until he had found it, to the joy of his soul.

The vessel got under way, and never was white sail watched with more prayerful eyes than was the ——'s on that occasion. She had not proceeded far, however, when the wind came ahead, and the ship had to be put on tack to weather the harbour. The captain went below to examine his charts, when lo! the principal ones were missing, they had been left behind. The night was setting dark and dreary; a storm was evidently at hand. The captain felt the responsibility of his position; a dozen of lives were depending upon him; he resolved to put about and run for the harbour. While pacing the deck, revolving in his mind what had occurred the night before, a ray of light shot down from above. He saw himself a sinner, and in the same moment, as quick as thought, his pardon through Christ was sealed upon his heart.

Never did his vessel seem to him so dull a sailer. He wanted to fly with the wings of a dove to reveal the fact to his loving wife. At length the ship is moored, and he is once more over his own threshold.

"Glory to God," he exclaimed, "I am saved; saved not from the dangers of the sea, but of eternal perdition."

His wife wept for joy, and heaven itself could scarcely exceed the bliss now experienced by the happy family. Next day he re-sailed, but with far other feelings than ever he had done before. Both felt that his good ship was now secured with a new policy, even the assurance of One who holds the winds and waves in his hand, and whose express terms are, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

A result of the foregoing was the conversion of one or two other persons under circumstances scarcely less interesting.

THE BIBLE CONFIRMED BY THE DISCOVERIES AT NINEVEH.

God, in His wisdom and goodness, has seen fit to make the proof of His word *cumulative* with the succession of ages. In addition to the evidence, internal and external, from miracles and prophecies, and from personal experience, all of which intensifies with the progress of time, a powerful confirmation of the Bible is furnished in modern

science and discovery. Recent explorations have made the Holy Land itself a witness in behalf of the Holy Book. The new science of the earth, which at first created trepidation in the minds of many, now delivers the whole of its testimony in favour of the Bible.

But God had another evidence hidden away in the earth, to be brought forth in due time, not engraven by Himself in successive strata, but chiselled by man, in alabaster and marble, upon temples and palaces, which were the highest exhibition of human glory. The fulfilment of prophecy in the destruction of Nineveh was in its time a new testimony to the divinity of the Sacred Record. But God would use this city again as a witness; and so, long before Christ came, before the founding of the eternal city, He buried it up in its own *debris*, to be called forth again, in solemn and awe-inspiring testimony, after the tardy lapse of twenty-five centuries. To the modern traveller the site of Nineveh presents the appearance of a rural district, with grass and fields of grain waving over its fallen greatness, whilst the massive piles of palace and temple bear only the appearance of green, nicely-rounded mounds, with a depth of from ten to thirty feet of earth above their buried memorials. The discoveries of Layard and others have brought forth in sculpture and inscription the history of Assyria, for a period of 900 years from B.C. 1237 to B.C. 338, which is found to be parallel with, and confirmatory of, the Sacred Record. God kept the history of that nation for the last 900 years of her existence, so that her memory might be preserved in the earth, until he could call forth her hidden records to confirm His own.

The sculpture found corroborates the Bible account of the power and glory of that ancient city as a contemporary and rival of Jerusalem; it confirms the description of Nimrod as a "mighty hunter before the Lord," the Bible representation of the high position to which eunuchs rose in the Assyrian monarchy, the account of horses "swifter than the leopards, and more fierce than the evening wolves," the description of "machines for battering walls," "grappling arms," "chariots," and "precious cloths for chariots." It represents the "scribe of the host," standing with style in hand taking a minute account of the spoil and of the slain, as he counts the captured cattle and the severed heads of warriors brought before him.

It shows a bas-relief of a king placing his foot upon the neck of a captured monarch, making a "footstool of enemies." It presents Assyrian warriors in a procession carrying away four captive idols, which stood upon a platform resting upon their shoulders, as the Babylonians were to take the gods of Egypt and "carry them away captive," or as the idol of Samaria should be carried away captive by the Assyrians.

The inscriptions found identify the Sennacherib of sacred history as the builder of the great palace at Nineveh. They give an account of a victory over Merodach Baladan, who sent messengers to Hezekiah, to whom he showed his treasures, and for which vanity these very treasures were carried away as spoils to the country from which they came. They also give an account of Sennacherib's invading the kingdom of Hezekiah, as follows:—"Hezekiah, king of Judah, who had not submitted to my authority, I shut up within Jerusalem, his capital city; I took his principal cities and carried away spoil." Now, turn to 2 Kings xviii. 13, and you read; "Now, in the 14th year of King Hezekiah, did Sennacherib come up against all the fenced cities and took them." But what is still more positive and remarkable is the mention of the amount of tribute levied by the Assyrian king. Sennacherib says:—"I took thirty talents of gold and eight hundred of silver." The Bible says: "And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah, king of Judah, three hundred talents of silver and thirty of gold." The amount of gold is precisely the same. The discrepancy as to the silver probably arises from the fact that the Bible account only gives the amount of silver in coin, while the Assyrian, desirous of making the figures as large as possible, included both the coin and the silver in plate, that was cut off from the temple. (See 2 Kings xviii. 15.) And thus the apparent disagreement becomes the stronger evidence. Sennacherib does not give the account of his own defeat, when 185,000 of his men perished in one night; but this is only confirmation, for he would not wish to perpetuate the memory of his own overthrow, but rather to gloss it over by an account of the glory of his former invasion. And so it is. One of the most gorgeous and extensive sculptures found represents the siege and capture by the Assyrians of a great city. There were the towers and battlements of the city—several trenches thrown up against it—an unusual number of warriors drawn up before the city

in successive ranks, of kneeling, bending, and standing archers, mingled with sling men and spear-men, a perfect phalanx. Battering-rams and scaling-ladders were in operation. The besieged thronged the battlements and towers, defending themselves by showering arrows, javelins, stones, and blazing torches upon the assailants. But the victory was turning upon the side of the besiegers, who were already securing their spoil and captives, whilst the king, upon his throne, was receiving the chiefs of the conquered nation that knelt and crouched before him. Over the head of the king was this inscription: "Sennacherib, the mighty king, the king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment before the city of Lachish—I give permission for its slaughter." Now in the Bible passage referred to we read, "And Hezekiah, king of Judah, sent to the king of Assyria, at Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me; that which thou puttest on me I will bear." Here, then, we have the identification of a king, a city, a people, and a victory! What wonderful coincidence! The name of Jonah, said to be inscribed upon the pillars in Nineveh, where he preached, is also a striking coincidence. There have been discovered in these ruins fifty-six proper names, which are found in the Scriptures; we have not space to trace these out in their coincidence of detail, but the simple fact of the names appearing in both records is a striking confirmation of the Sacred Word.

Here has come down to us, across the chasm of twenty-five centuries, a contemporaneous history, concurring with our Sacred Record in chronology, in names, in minute detail. These sculptures and inscriptions are no impositions to add a spurious authority to the Bible. They bear in themselves the most indubitable marks of genuineness; and then the fact that they have been concealed in the earth, and unknown to all our modern history, precludes the idea of any collusion. Neither was this history recorded by the ancient Assyrians to corroborate the Bible, for they were the enemies of the Jews. Their evidence is all the better, as from an impartial witness: just as poor Gibbon, in spite of his "fine reasons," has furnished in his history material for the illustration of one of the best expositions of the Book of Revelation. Whilst these Assyrian monarchs were vain-gloriously recording their own greatness in conquering God's chosen people, they were at the same time recording

their testimony, which was to be used in confirmation of the Bible, long, long after their deeds of glory were forgotten.

Whilst God has kept to Himself the secret of this reserved testimony, His word has been making its way among the nations, until now He sees best to "bring forth out of His treasures these things both new and old," to confirm and energise His book. What greater wonder in human history than this blessed Bible? It chronicled the birth of Nimrod, the founder of Nineveh! It recorded that inaugural 5,000 years ago; it preached there the Gospel of repentance; it thundered there the woes of God upon sin; it foretold and then recorded the sad record of its fall; it turned from the grave of her departed greatness, and lived on and on, until to-day she arises from the dead, and with her newly-speaking, antique, pagan language, testifies to the historic truth of the Scriptures!

WHAT HAVE WE LEFT?

SOMETIMES losses and bereavements fall very suddenly on God's people. They are all at once cast down from prosperity into privation and want, or from the enjoyment of the society of the dear ones into solitude and loneliness.

It becomes them, while mourning over lost joys, to encourage resignation to God's will, and to be thankful for what remains. All is not taken away from us. God has not "struck all our comforts dead." Thus God's saints in all ages have acted, and have found their account in so doing.

When the Amalekites had taken away David's wives, children, and property (1 Sam. xxx.), he did not, like his followers, give way to despondency, but still encouraged himself in the Lord his God. He still had a God to go to. God's high priest was also with him; he inquired, he prayed, he used aright what was left; and all his lost comforts were restored.

When Mary and Martha had lost their brother, they still had a Saviour left. At His feet they cast themselves, and He restored their lost one again. We may not expect this as regards this world; but whatever death may have taken from us, we have Him

who is "the resurrection and the life" yet remaining; and "if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

Jeremiah seemed to have lost all his joys, and for a time almost lost hope, as he exclaimed, "My strength and my hope are perished from the Lord." But he recalled to his mind the cheering fact, that "God's compassions fail not," and this precious fact conducted him to the triumphant conclusion, "The Lord is my portion;" and then hope filled the future with the richest blessings and most glorious prospects.

Tried saint of God, look at these instances, and learn submission to your Father's will; yea, seek grace to be cheerful by rejoicing in hope; by being grateful for what was lent so long, and also for what is still spared. To thee thy heavenly Father saith—

"Thou hast thy Bible and thy bread;
And waiting, thou shalt see
The secret meaning of thy life,
And all my care for thee."

While submissive, hopeful, and grateful, be also deeply penitent. Think how little thou hast improved God's manifold benefits, and let this produce still deeper resignation. Think also how He is working for thy good, and earnestly desire grace to love supremely the merciful and wondrous Worker.

"All are not taken: there are left behind
Living beloveds, tender looks, to bring
And make the daylight still a happy thing,
And tender voices, to make soft the wind.
But if it were not so, if I could find
No love in all this world for comforting,
Nor any path but hallowly did ring,
Where 'dust to dust,' the love from life disjoined;
And if before those sepulchres, unmoving,
I stood alone (as some forsaken lamb
Goes bleating up the woods in weary dearth),
Crying, 'Where are ye, O my loved and loving?'—
I know a voice would sound, Daughter, I AM;
Can I suffice for heaven and not for earth?"

CARD PLAYING.

“WHY do Christians object to card playing?”

1. On account of its avowedly worldly character. Universally card playing is taken as a symbol of worldliness, gaiety and trifling. And this view of the amusement is, with judicious Christians, quite enough to prevent their indulging in it. A line must be drawn somewhere to distinguish the Church from the world, and one of these lines—and a very proper one it is,—has been drawn round those amusements which bear the character as above. To step over that line is, in the estimation of the truly good, an inconsistency and error; and Christians wishing to preserve a conscience void of offence, and give offence to none, are careful not to err in this respect. This is in perfect keeping with apostolic precept and example.

2. Another reason lies in the extremely trifling character of cards. The game is one of the most silly, unmeaning and trifling of amusements, calling forth no deep thought, no skill worth the name, and so far as either the party themselves or others are concerned, attaining no kind of good. This is different with many other games that could be named.

3. A third ground of objection is found in the completely chance character of the game. To all purely chance games, Christians generally take strong objections, and view them as of such a nature as to forbid devout persons indulging in them. None can deny the chance feature of cards, and hence it lies open to all the common objections of chance games in general.

4. A fourth argument against cards is the gambling associated with it. It is true this might be omitted; but when is it? Ask any avowed card players whether they would think them worth playing if no odds were at stake; and if it be not this which give them a zest they could not, from their own trifling and insipid character, possibly possess. Take away the stakes, and you would find cards almost universally scouted as the most empty and unsatisfactory of amusements.

5. The associations of card playing are no mean argument against it with right feeling persons. The dissipation with which it usually stands connected; the ruin it has brought on many a youth; the

domestic misery of which it has been the frightful parent; the wicked men with which it seems to unite you; are all, with other associations, of such a nature as to prevent truly virtuous minds allowing themselves its indulgence.

6. But with true Bible taught Christians, those who form their Christian morality not from the lax notions of this lax and worldly age, but from the principles and precepts of Holy Writ, card-playing is felt to be so incompatible with the Word of God, as to be utterly removed from the list of their amusements. Take such precepts as those that require us to do all that we do to the glory of God; to redeem the time; to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; to preserve a conscience void of offence toward God and man; to be separate from sinners; to come out from the world; to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; and others of like character. The spirit and tendency of all this is, and must be, counter to such amusements as cards, and hence Christians very properly object to them as a fit amusement at their social gatherings.

PARENTAL DUTY.

CHRISTIAN PARENTS! beware lest you shrink from any part of your duty towards your children, because it is painful. Because the rod has so often been raised in anger, and inflicted in a wrong spirit, you are in danger of forgetting "that it is a means ordained by God for the pain of the flesh, that the soul may be saved from hell." Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child—it is a part of his very nature. The rod of correction is *God's means* of getting rid of it. Use the Lord's means, and we *can* then what otherwise we cannot do, wait in faith for the promised blessing. There is no punishment so humbling as the rod, and therefore so enriching. There are very few children who do not need the rod, many need it often. In after life many have looked back to the benefits wrought by it, while others have lived to regret the false tenderness that withheld it. The biographer of Hamilton Forsyth thus writes:—

"Of the value of paternal firmness, he was in later years most fully and feelingly aware. Those who have heard him open his heart occasionally on this subject, will recollect how beautiful were the

reverential fear and love with which he dwelt on the history of his own correction, and blessed the vigour which had sometimes used the rod.

"In his father's general management of him, and especially in his chastening of him as a little child, he considered there had been a skill and gracious influence which all his fond affection could never repay."

Let this instance encourage you in your dealings with your children. If remonstrance fail, use the rod; but let your child feel that love raises your hand to give him pain, and let this discipline be a matter not talked of in your family, but a matter between you and your child; let him feel that it causes you pain, and let your prayer be, "Lord, do Thou be pleased to strike in with every stroke, that the rod of correction may be a rod of instruction."

LOIS AND EUNICE.*

THE anxious mother is ready, perhaps, to exclaim, "O that I knew how Eunice brought up her son Timothy, what means she used to inspire his infant mind with unfeigned faith! For though faith is the gift of God, not to be attained by any unassisted efforts of man, yet the unfeigned faith that was in Lois descended to Eunice, and from her was transmitted to Timothy. Would that I could thus ensure the salvation of *my* child!"

Of the means used we are not left ignorant; the faith of Lois and Eunice was "unfeigned." If we would be, like them, the happy mothers of such sons as Timothy, let us ask ourselves, "Is our faith unfeigned?" I mean not only that we be converted to God ourselves,—if we are not, there is but little hope that we shall train up our children in the *fear* of God, certainly we cannot in his *love*,—but even if we have a true faith, Is it in earnest? Is it lively? Is it in exercise? Is it of such a nature as to pervade all our lives, and make them consistent? Is it "unfeigned"? Do we mean all we tell them? Do we feel all we put before them? Do we act in accordance with what we teach them? If we say "Love not the world," do we walk as those who love it not ourselves? If we say

* From "Abraham and his Children." By Mrs. Gosse.

"The fashion of this world passeth away," do we walk as if we thought this life a vapour, and that which is to come the only reality? If we say to them, "What shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul," do we let them see that no amount of talent, beauty, riches, natural sweetness, weighs with us for a moment in the balance against personal piety and grace? if we tell them that Christ's yoke is easy, do they see us bearing it with meekness and lowliness of heart? If we tell them that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, do they see that *we* are anxious to warn sinners to flee from a coming judgment? If we tell them that they ought to obey God rather than man, do they see that *we* are more anxious to please the Lord than to gain the approbation, or escape the enmity of our fellow creatures? While we repeat to them the words of the Lord Jesus, who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," do they see in us more alacrity in meeting the spiritual and temporal wants of others, than in receiving or welcoming any accession to our own possessions? And, lastly, when we tell them that "He that exalteth himself shall be abased," do they behold in us that humility which the Lord Jesus has so frequently promised to honor and exalt?

That faith only is an unfeigned faith, which manifests its reality by acting on the Word of God as unquestionably true.

The unfeigned, and therefore practical faith of Eunice, led her to feed the infant mind of her child on the sincere milk of the Word, as the Lord himself had commanded: saying,

"Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house and upon thy gates: that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth." (Deut. xi. 18—21.)

In the spirit, if not in the letter of this command, did Eunice bring up her son, and in the spirit, if not in the letter, of the promise annexed did she reap her reward.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

CHRISTIAN CONSISTENCY.

A Sermon

Preached on Sunday Morning, December 18, 1859,

BY THE REV. W. M. PUNSHON,

AT HINDE STREET CHAPEL.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—MATT. V. 16.

IN the last verse of the fourth chapter it is written, "And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan;" and in the first verse of the fifth chapter it is written, "And, seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain, and when he was set his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them." It would seem, probably, from these two statements following each other so closely, and with a sort of relative sequence, as if the Saviour felt that the great field of the world was ripe before the harvest-men were ready to reap it; that the harvest truly was plenteous, but the labourers were unskilled as well as few. Some of the disciples had been already charmed to his side, and as he looked at them as they stood around him, the discrepancy between the mighty work and the mean instrumentality, thrust itself upon his notice, and the felt weakness of the agency seems to have constrained the commencement of that wondrous teaching, by which those simple-hearted listeners, in a way which they knew not, became, in the after time, the powers that shook the world.

The feebleness and the ignorance in spiritual things, on the part of those he had chosen, seems to have been the immediate occasion of the sermon on the mount. It was addressed to those who, both in heart and understanding, by its wondrous truths, might be fitted for their assigned labour as the fishers of men. But not to the disciples alone were spoken these words of warning and of promise. For us they sound—for us, upon whom the heir-ship of the age has come, and who dwell in the fulness of time. Jesus is not on the mountain pulpit now; he has gone upwards, in the æther of the upper atmosphere breathing; but his words die not. They are fresh, and thrilling with young life in them, to stir each holy thought and purpose into action, when the Spirit brings them home. Be it yours, brethren, to listen reverently to these words of the Lord Jesus to-day.

It was meet that he should commence with blessings. Habitual thoughts are the freshest, the most familiar words came readiest to the tongue; and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and so on. After this bracelet of beatitudes, in which some have discovered a progression from the conscious poverty of spirit which groans under a sense of destitution, up through various grades of faith, and of assurance to the high sanctification, and the firm faith which blenches not from the agonies of martyrdom—after this bracelet of beatitudes there comes the second proposition, which forms the basis of the exhortation of the text, "Ye are the salt of the earth; ye are the light of the world." As salt is the great preservative by which bodies are kept from corruption, so Christians in a corrupt world are the vital antiseptic power. As light is the great revealer and witness, so Christians, in a world of gross and utter darkness, testify of the dayspring from on high. But as salt must of necessity impregnate before it can purify, and as light must of necessity be manifest

February, 1860.

before it can illuminate, so the Christian, to fulfil his mission, must not be nascent, but active; not cowardly, but courageous; not an anchorite, but a man. "Let your light so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

There are presented to us in these words, first, the primary and secondary purpose of the Christian life; and, secondly, the means by which this purpose may be most effectively fulfilled.

I. There are the two purposes, primary and secondary, of the Christian life. All the purposes of the Christian life must be subordinate, in the first instance, to the ultimate purpose, which is the glory of God—"that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." This is the primary purpose in the Christian life. This, indeed, is a matter of necessity communicating itself to all the proprieties of the moral sense, and to all the inductions of enlightened reason. God, as the Father of mankind, in which endearing name is involved both his creative and governmental character, claims, and claims justly, the highest homage of the creatures he has made. For his own glory he made the world; for his own glory he peopled it with the tribes of the intelligent; for his own glory he enstamped in those tribes his own image, and delegated to them, by the gift of moral freedom, a portion of his own power. For his own glory, when man had abused this privilege and destroyed himself, did he build up out of the ruins of the fall, an architecture of yet greater comeliness, and redeemed the race which he had originally created and endowed. It is manifest, then, that when the heart has listened to the great teacher, and has felt the power of the transforming Spirit, there will be in it an instant and constant recognition of this great duty. The obedient life will be all to the glory of God. The bursting hallelujahs of the heart's thankfulness will be all to the praise of God's glory.

The essential glory of God—that which he had from the beginning is, of course, incapable, either of increase or of change. It was, and is, and is to come, everlasting. It is only necessary, therefore, in order that our Father who is in heaven should be glorified, that he should be seen—manifested in the sight of man, that thus we may declare his glory, and exhibit his glory, if we cannot increase his glory. He is seen, and therefore glorified in the order of creation. The sun, in its tireless shining, the tides in their regular flow, the march of the solemn stars, the beautiful harvests, the mountains and mighty hills, all show forth his power, and in their eloquent silence redound to their Creator's praise. He is seen, and therefore glorified in the arrangements of Providence, in the perpetual presidency of the divine over human affairs. Revolution always issuing in reconstruction, the social compact and the familiar joy, the numberless compensations, which in their beneficent and equalising action, have almost the force and regularity of law.

The extraction of gladness out of suffering, and of health out of poison, and of strength of soul out of grinding and bitter trouble, all these contrivances of all-merciful wisdom magnify the great Giver and redound to the praise of his glory. And so it is in the work of redemption. Every instance of conversion wrought by his Spirit through the atonement of his Son, when the captive exile hastens to be loosed, and with new enfranchisement sings songs of liberty and hope; when the nature, radically polluted and impure, exhibits a blameless and sin-mastering life, and perseveres through all difficulties with a heavenliness of character which meetens it for a heaven of enjoyment—there is the glorifying of our Father that is in heaven, transcending all glory besides; one which stirs the seraph minstrels into their highest ecstasies of praise. This, therefore should be the steady purpose—your steady purpose in the daily forth puttings of your Christian life—to glorify God. Every question of Christian casuistry must be settled by his will; every act must be consecrated by his blessing; all matters of earthly concernment must be

judged of in the light which streams from his throne. This is, in fact, the essential difference between the man that is born, and the man that is born again—the one is influenced by motives of external pressure, but which this world bounds; the other subordinates all minor matters to the one grand life-purpose of glorifying God. And thus it must be with you when the greater obligation comes into collision with the less, as it will sometimes, when passion, and interest, and friendship, and even earthly mandate, all point one way, and duty, distinctly perceived, lifts her solitary finger in another, the decided heart choosing the right and spurning the wrong, must adopt as its rule of action the acknowledgment of the divine supremacy, “We ought to obey God rather than man.” When temptation presents itself in some form of endearment, or in some mantle of beauty, and when the flesh is weak, before the well circumstanced sin, the victorious spirit, realising the invisible, should say, “How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” When common things, or familiar and ordinary matters of life, call for a rule or regulation, and for a standard of arbitration and opinion, you will be at no loss to find it in the apostle’s words—“Whether, therefore, we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God.” That is the primary purpose of the Christian’s life.

And subsidiary to this, and in order to its perfect evolution, is the secondary purpose—to walk before men in all well-pleasing. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” It is part of the design of God, touching the promulgation of his gospel, that it should be extended by human agency. In its first ages it was supported by the attestation of miracles; but in perpetuity it has been confided (never, of course, to the exclusion of divine influence) to the use of means. God has so formed our nature that we are uniformly, and almost involuntarily, receiving impressions from each other. Life is nothing but one vast series of dependencies. So subtle and so persuasive is this law of association, that it is influential, even when we are hardly conscious of its existence. The chance word from the lips of a friend, falling upon some nascent desire like a spark upon tinder; the vision of some grave or wise one, held up to the glance of fancy so often, that it has become the ideal model of the heart’s aspiring; the music of some old word greeting the ear with a strange melody, have fixed the tone of a spirit and have fashioned the direction of a life. The world is just one unbroken chain of these actions and reactions. We are bound by them; we are compassed by them; and we can no more escape from them than we can fling ourselves beyond the influence of the law of gravitation, or refuse to be trammelled by the all-embracing air. The design of God in using these mutual dependencies for the spreading of the gospel is manifest from many scriptural facts. The call of Cornelius, which might have been less troublesomely and more rapidly accomplished by the angel who appeared to him in vision, was reserved till Peter had taken the weary journey from Joppa to Cesarea; in the conversion of the blessed St. Paul, the human agency was signally evident in the person of Ananias, the certain disciple from Damascus. And this is God’s method of proceeding still. For this he instituted his own grand ordinance of preaching, that the eternal truth might be communicated to mankind in tones of kindred speech, endearing feeling and emotion, flitting over the countenance awhile, and the soul’s deep sympathy welling up through the utterances of the tongue. And, in your own experience, the friend’s kind word or kinder life, how eloquent the sermon. How your prostrate spirit melted from its savage winter as a tender piety shone upon it. How, like some rock against which the waves of the frantic ocean have dashed for ages in vain, but which was shivered in a moment by the lightning, your hearts long wayward, in after years of hardening, were cleft asunder in a moment by the memory of some nursery hymn, or of some gentle mother’s prayer.

And as human nature is the same always, in all circumstances, and in all conditions, the same effect will, by God's blessing, continue to be produced by human persuasion and example unto the end of time. Brethren, how solemn the responsibility in which this involves each individual believer, aye, each individual man. The stone flung from my careless hand into the lake, splashed down into the depths of the flowing water, and that was all—no, it was not all. Look at those concentric rings, rolling their tiny ripples among the sedgy reeds, dipping the overhanging boughs of yonder willow, and producing an influence, slight, but conscious, to the very shores of the lake itself. That hasty word, that word of pride or scorn flung from my lips in casual company, produces a momentary depression, and that is all—no, it is not. It deepened that man's disgust at godliness, and it sharpened the edge of that man's sarcasm, and it shamed that half-converted one out of his penitent misgivings, and it produced an influence, slight, but eternal, on the destiny of an immortal life. Oh, it is a terrible power that I have—this power of influence—and it clings to me. I cannot shake it off. It is born with me; it has grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. It speaks, it walks, it moves; it is powerful in every look of my eye, in every word of my lips, in every act of my life. I cannot live to myself. I must either be a light to illumine, or a tempest to destroy. I must either be an Abel, who, by his immortal righteousness, being dead yet speaketh, or an Achan, the saddest continuance of whose otherwise forgotten name, is the fact that man perishes not alone in his iniquity. Oh, brethren, this necessary element of power belongs to you all. Thy sphere may be contracted, thine influence may be small, but a sphere and influence you have. Use it, I beseech you, for God. Let your light shine before men. It does not seem to refer to the active advice, so much as to the quiet exhibition of the Christian life. Let your light shine before men, not upon men, as a perpetual rebuke, like a policeman's lantern, turned suddenly upon a detected and affrighted criminal, but before men—something that they may pass time after time and not discover it, and at last, wondering at the radiance that always shines upon a particular spot, look up and see the light. Let your light shine before men, a steady, consistent, brilliant example, something that does not obtrude, but is always manifest, something that has no pride about it, but always shines with a certain influence of goodness, which the world will by-and-bye very gratefully acknowledge. This is your duty, your solemn, earliest duty, to let your light shine before men, that, wondering at its luminous and radiant flame, they may see your good works, and gazing up from the light-bearers in loving and reverent appreciation to their great original, glorify your Father that is in heaven.

II. I come then, secondly, to notice the means by which this witness-bearing, this testifying may be most effectually done; and I think we shall discover, perhaps, that we cannot more directly find out the most effectual method of testimony than by following the beautiful and suggestive analogy of the text—let your *light* shine before men. And I would just observe there are multitudes of similitudes which I might have brought before you as illustrations of the steady purpose of the Christian life, but we will confine ourselves to three. Light is derived, and therefore humble; light is self-evident and consistent, and therefore wants no covering; light is joyous and happy, and therefore needs no pity.

First, light is derived, and therefore humble. God is the great original of light. There was a time when it was not; when this world was a nameless and unfinished chaos, and darkness brooded over the face of the deep. Light was the first born of creation. "God said: Let there be light, and there was light." All the forms and modifications of light may be traced up to this act of the great Creator, who made two great lights; the greater

light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. From the fount of the sun all the streams of light are flowing. Light is presented to us in ever-varying conditions, but it is always the same; there is a oneness in its essence after all. It is the same light that glistens on the wings of the fire-fly and blazes on the ruddy hearth-stone, and sparkles on the jewels of the diadem, and flashes in beauty in the morning. Science tells us that those prolific beds of coal in the bowels of the earth were once forests on its surface, forests of luxuriant vegetation; that they incorporated the sun's rays, and then in merciful convulsions were embedded in the centre of the lower earth by an all-provident foresight for the wants of an inhabited world. Science, tells us, too, that time was when the shapeless crystal was yet new to its covering of earth. Subjected to the wheel of the lapidary it sparkles out to view as a gem of the purest water. It is but the release of imprisoned rays, which shone from the same great source, long centuries ago; so that both in the cottage fire light and in the monarch's gem we have just the resurrection of some olden summer, the great return of some sepulchred sunlight from which man has rolled away the stone.

Now, whether this scientific theory be true or not, certain it is, that in our spiritual condition we are in darkness, all of us, gross and utter, until the true light shineth on us from on high. We have no native light above us; we cannot gather any from any of the sources by which we are surrounded. "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of light, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

No, light is the implantation of the new nature; and for the power of resistance to evil and growth in grace, for the light of conscience, and for concurrent testimony, we are entirely dependent upon God. Let this thought fasten itself upon our minds. We have nothing that we have not received; and this will restrain our rising arrogance, and embue us with the humility which becomes us before God. This is the humility indeed which all nature teaches us. There is no pride in light. The sun shines not haughtily; the brilliant hosts on high are unconscious of their own radiance. "Day unto day uttereth speech," but it is speech of God, not of themselves. The heavens and firmament boast not their own beauty and magnificence, they declare his glory, and show forth his handy work. Light has got an assigned mission, and hastens without faltering, and without interval, noiseless, and active to fulfil it. Sunrise upon the mountains, how beautiful it is, when the morning, rising from its couch of clouds, peers over the distant hills, and ever climbing into greater splendour, streams down into the valleys, and gazes full-orbed upon the world. But how silently it comes upon us. In obedience to the tidal forces, the waves of ocean break upon the strand, but they break with a great noise, and the mountains shake with swellings thereof, and of the still grander tones of the sea's majestic roar, but all around us, shining day by day, coming in endless undulations, there are thousands upon thousands of waves of light, a mightier force, a more omnipotent agency, a more palpable type of the divine: but it works in silence; there is no tumult in its royal march, it works in that silence which is said to be the energy of God, and thus instantaneously but constantly must your light shine before men. It is not *you* that are to shine; don't make that mistake. It is your *light*. Let your *light* shine before men. All thought of self absorbed, all personal considerations lost, swallowed up in the grand life purpose of glorifying God. Let your light shine before men. Brethren, the exaltation of self would only tend to the obscuration of the light. There is no more effectual bushel in the world under which to put the light than the obtrusion of self as deity. Let your light so shine before men to the exclusion, and to the mastery of ourselves in this matter. The Scriptures exhort us that

we are to please all men for their good unto their edification; and yet the love of approbation, swelling even from natural instinct into a sore temptation—the love of approbation is to be repressed, and mastered, and subdued; the temple of the Spirit is to rise, speedily and consecrated, and the world is to witness its rising, but all must be done without any arraying of scenes of human acts or human hopes. The temptation to mingle ourselves with our Master in interest and in reputation is a temptation which assails us all. All of you must be conscious of it. Even the man of smallest opportunities, and of narrowest means of influence, must be conscious of it; and those whose unhappy fate it is to be upon the hill, will of course feel the first blast the more. The pride of honour, the pride of human applause; the pride that prides itself in trampling out that pride, is treacherous. What greater pride is there than the pride of victory over evil, the pride of successful resistance to temptation, the pride of complaisant rejoicing in the time of another's fall, the pride of the doing right on which many a man has clothed himself as in a coat of mail. All these subtle and dangerous enemies will haunt our memories, and whisper to us in our holiest services, twining themselves like so many serpents around the pillar of the sanctuary of God. But brethren, it must be ours to think so much of our Master, that we have no time or room for any thought of ourselves. To thrust the proud self into retirement, and to hold forth only the precious Saviour—and as the cynic, of whom we have heard, made his request to Alexander, that he would first forbear from hiding the sunshine—so we, not in his spirit, for we are no cynics—not in his spirit, should put away from us all the proud, and vain, and lofty imaginations that intercept the moral sunshine, that arrest its direct influence, which we find in our humble happiness to bear witness to the light, and in serener happiness to manifest that light among men. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

I come secondly to notice that light is self-evident and consistent. Though we are not to obtrude the light, nor to obtrude ourselves as the vehicles of the light, we are not on the other hand to hinder the light from any, nor to darken or conceal its rays. It is an essential property of light to shine. It is its own witness; it does not need any external display; only let there be the intervention of no foreign body. Let the light alone and it will shine. How obedient is it. It has no choice of place; there is no exclusive haughtiness about its shining; it throws itself upon the breast of the mountain, and the mist gathers like a fleecy garb at its feet; but it peers into the grandest gorge and wildest glade, and dimples with ineffable beauty, the solitary face of nature. It shines equally on the humble hut and the gallant tower, and with persevering benevolence, struggles through darksome cellars, to give a glimpse of heaven to the poor; and it glimmers through the loopholes of the dungeon, to illuminate the captive in his gloom. Under all circumstances, and through every engagement, let the light alone and it will shine. “Let your light so shine before men.”

The light of Christian example ought to be as consistent and as self-evident as the light of heaven. Once kindled in the heart it should shine brighter and brighter, not with alternations of dimness, but steadily, waxing into increasing lustre, brighter and brighter unto perfect day. The piety of a Christian ought not to be intermittent, nor feverish with high excitement, nor feeble with unusual languor. It should be the calm and steady principle that has constant communion with God, and which, in the evenness of its display, exhibits the graces of the Spirit before men. This requirement of consistency condemns the indulgence in any disposition, or in any practice that would damage the light, or that would damage the influence of the example. It condemns worldliness, therefore, and simple conformity to the maxims and

axioms of the world. Its high tone of morality abstains from all appearance of evil. You will never find it go as near to the edge of the cliff as it can with impunity. It always keeps as far as possible out of the reach of peril. It does not tread upon the line of demarcation, and almost over it; it goes into the centre of the narrow way as the safest place in the universe for it. It indulges in nothing equivocal, and it has a deep, strong tenderness of conscience, that always brands the doubtful as the bad.

This requirement of consistency condemns fickleness too, spasmodic activity or devotion, the continuity of the soul's earnestness only in times of high excitement—life in the sanctuary and lethargy at home, devoutness in the congregation, but slumber or death in the closet. This requirement of consistency condemns censoriousness, the evil misgivings of the heart, the pride that would depreciate, or the envy that would injure, or the malice that would conspire against another, that would hinder its elevation to holiness. There is no spirit so hateful as that of the Pharisee, who flings off the publican from fellowship of devotion; and there is no spirit so thoroughly despicable and absolutely contemptible as that of this wicked Haman, to whom great favours and riches availed nought so long as Mordecai the Jew was sitting at the king's gate. Then this requirement of consistency condemns also cowardice. The hiding of the light under a bushel, the unworthy seclusion that would hold religion in its miserly heart, and that would go to heaven alone. All these which have in their measure weakened the church's influence, and hindered the light of its example, are condemned by the exhortations of the text. It must not be a feverish gleam, nor a meteor of the marsh, nor a revolving lantern, emitting an occasional or periodical radiance, but a light, calm, uniform, steady, shining alike in the calm as in the storm. Its emblem, if emblem it must have, should be the light on the cliff; the startled waves rush over it, the storm smites it, the rain beats against it, and heavily against it rolls the broad shoulders of the hurricane; but steadfast, serene, immutable, the same year after year, through all, the silent light burns on; for evermore that quenchless flame shines—that inextinguishable light. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father that is in heaven."

Then the light, in the third place, is a joyous and happy sort of thing. Truly, the light is sweet and a pleasant thing it is, for the eyes to behold the sun. You cannot separate from light the ideas of beauty, warmth, and gladness. The first ruby tint of dawn upon the clouds, the golden glory of noontide, the purple splendour of the western sky when the tired sun hastens to his setting, the chaste gleaming of the queenly moon, the ruddy blaze of the firelight in the ingle nook of home, how beautiful they are, how suggestive of happiness and comfort and joy! As glorious as the light, should be the piety of the true believer. Who has so many and substantial reasons for happiness? Who grasps so many of the truest satisfactions? Who, as he, has learned to rejoice in tribulation and to trust in trouble? Who, as he, has such an inheritance, such a gladdening heritage of present and of future blessing? The spirit of dark asceticism, the spirit of surly moroseness, are alike foreign to the mind of the man in Christ. They caricature our light-giving Christianity; they libel its boundlessness of love, who dolefully grieve with fretful complaints; who are sanctimonious when they think themselves sanctified; who wear wreaths of cypress, and weave wreaths of cypress for the brow of youth, and who frown in their melancholy upon all the relaxations and enjoyments of life. Oh, let the light shine on those dissatisfied ones, and this will pass away. One gleam of the sun will cure and dispel all these moral despondencies, and the man going away in that gladsome beauty, and manifesting that light before man, will charm others also to the feet of Jesus. Let your light thus shine, so as to be the exhibition of this happy godliness, the light of cheerfulness

without frivolity, the light of benevolence without ostentation, the light of holiness, followed like the angel's, with humility—this is to be your endeavour before men. The character of John the Baptist, as it has been depicted by the Saviour in his teaching, is, however, within the reach of you all, and such a character, shining up in the midst of it, the world knows not how to understand. They say the world has an eagle eye for anything inconsistent; and it has an eagle eye, sharp to discover the vagaries and inconsistencies in the faulty and the unworthy. It has an eagle eye, but the eagle winks before the sun, and the burning iris of its eye shrinks abashed before the unsullied purity of noon. Let your light so shine before men, that others, awed and charmed by the consistency of your godly life, may come to inquire and to say they have been with Jesus. Thus fulfilling your mission you shall not labour in vain; you shall have the recompense of the reward—the Divine consolation shall succour your manhood, and shall group up, like ministering angels, to cheer the monotony of age. The last enemy shall be destroyed long before you enter into the field, and though your highest ambition would be abundantly satisfied if the only chronicle upon your tombstone were—“He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light,” the Saviour whom you have sincerely but imperfectly served, will render his attestation from the sky—“He was a burning and a shining light.” Let your light shine before men; let it shine in this way and it cannot fail to be powerful—it cannot fail to be powerful for good.

But there are some of you to whom the whole matter is strange and alien, because no light has been kindled at all, or if it has, “the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.” Is it so? Ah, there is no greater sin in this world, that I know of, than to hide the light. That is a vile church that hides the light—that is a vile man that hides the light. Can you conceive of a greater sin than to put out the light from the cliff, the deed of some foul wrecker, so that the vessel, heedless and ignorant of the coast, and looking up to the light, is dashed on the rocks, so that then the avaricious ones can come and take their prey? Is there a fouler crime in all the annals of criminal jurisprudence than that? And yet that is what some of you are doing. You are moral wreckers, hiding the light. It is within you, perhaps, kindled by the power of God, but you don't let it shine. You have covered it; worldliness has covered it; your many engagements have covered it; shyness, pride, indifference, unbelief, all have covered it. Under all these untoward circumstances, no wonder that it does not shine. The only wonder is that it has not gone out altogether. Perhaps it has. Perhaps it has. In some of you no light is left; but you are now in darkness; and if the light that is in thee be darkness, though with all thy privileges; how great is that darkness! Brethren, I summon you back to duty this morning. “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” If it does shine, let it shine, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit ask for his grace that it may shine more brightly, till it shine brighter and brighter unto perfect day.

And wondering, though unconscious for the most part, yet wondering at the amazing lustre that is shed, suddenly that light shall be darkened, because another light, purer, clearer, steadier, shall shine upon you, and as you look around the scene abashed, almost cowering beneath the ineffable blaze, wondering where the old familiar light has gone that has guided your footsteps so long, the voice of some kind angel shall say to you, “They need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the light thereof.”

May God bring us all into that light for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

“SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.”

PRECIOUS words! from the lips of our blessed Lord. A cup of cold water given in His name shall not lose its reward. Work is to be done—work for all hands. Sinners, feeble, old, and weak, are directed to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.” In this great work women take a part, and feel it to be their privilege. To receive *the commendation*, they must *do* the will of God.

The preaching of the Gospel is exclusively the honourable and glorious work of man; but is loving woman not to offer the bread of life to the perishing poor, for whom Christ cares? If her soul is imbued with that love of God which issues in love to all his creatures, she will direct the poor to her father’s house, knowing there is room in its “many mansions.”

Every pious, educated female should devote a *stated* portion of her time to read the Scriptures to the unlearned. Such labours of love do not involve public speaking, or any other unseemly course; but it does imply the diligent use and improvement of private intercourse with our poor neighbors, many of whom are perishing for lack of knowledge. Every Christian, under a deep sense of obligation, ought to promote the cause of Christ. True faith must produce fruit; and the fruits of righteousness are to the glory of God. “Every Christian is a blessing to the world; another grain of salt to go towards purifying the mass.”

Females, who instruct the uninstructed in the Scriptures, should feel that they are pledged women, solemnly bound to give weight to their exertions by the worth of their character. They must themselves have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and they must walk worthy of their high vocation.

Many find that in doing good to others, their own souls obtain supplies of grace. “The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” The process of doing good, in order to get good, is coming much into notice, and truly the prominence which Christian women in modern times have assumed in almost all works of religion and benevolence, is no new thing.

The Mother’s Magazine. March, 1860.

C

It was so from the beginning, and those who have not examined the Scriptures in reference to this subject will be surprised to see how abundant were the devout labors of women. Mary's act of faith was to be told throughout all the world for a memorial of her. Christ said of her, "She hath done what she could." And in the judgment-day Christ will say to all his faithful Marys, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." Paul calls Priscilla and her husband his "helpers in Christ." Phœbe, the servant of the Church, no doubt cared for and instructed the ignorant. Surely, no labor of love can equal that of winning souls to Christ.

Let every pious female be interested in the welfare of her own immediate neighborhood, and prayerfully instruct the poor.

"He bows His gracious ear—
We never plead in vain."

Be in earnest! oh! be in earnest. The preaching of the Gospel falls powerless on many hearts, not only from the hardening nature of sin, but from entire ignorance of the Scriptures. The minister addresses such in a n unknown language. We know God alone can savingly enlighten the mind, but He will own and bless prayerful efforts to make the mind familiar with the Bible. Hundreds are living in every locality in practical heathenism; oh! let us try to arrest their downward course. God could convert at once, by His Almighty power, the whole world, but He is pleased to employ human agency. His people are "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And His Word shall not return to Him void. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," and this powerful means of regenerating the world is in our hands. Can Christian women, with impunity, remain indifferent? Is there no commendation to the women who are at ease in Zion? If you have given yourselves to the Lord, you will, like the disciple mentioned in the first chapter of St. John, bring others to the Saviour. Every Christian who has time to spare ought to engage in some such labor of love, as she will wish she had done, when she comes to die.

"Then what thy thoughts design to do,
Still let thy hands with might pursue."

Every action we perform in the cause of Christ is a seed sown, which must bear fruit.

Christian females give themselves with great zeal to the duties of the Sabbath-school. The young are instructed, lambs are brought into the fold of Christ, and grateful prayers will ascend for that dear teacher of whom Christ will say, "She hath done what she could." But do the young *alone* claim your sympathies, while many aged females cannot read the Word of God? We know there are pious females, some even in the higher walks of life, who assemble the poor to read to them the glad tidings of salvation. Dear Christian friends, though sometimes discouraged, "thank God, and take courage." You may yet see the seed you sow take root and spring up, and bear the peaceable fruits of holiness. Of each of you the Lord will say, "She hath done what she could." Solemn, encouraging words! And each faithful Mary may say—

"Thus trusting in thy love,
I tread the narrow path of duty on."

We wish to induce others to do as you do. Let us provoke one another, not to envy and strife, but to love and good works; "and so much the more," saith the Apostle, "as you see the day approaching."

It may be a cross to the timid, retiring female, but take up the cross and follow Christ, who spared not himself: you will find true happiness spring up in the path of duty. Active benevolence generates the principle of happiness. Christ, though a man of sorrows, could not have been an unhappy man. Love filled his bosom, and he went about continually doing good; and where love prevails there cannot be misery. The worldling is miserable: he discovers the selfishness of the world, and he has nothing to fall back upon. Let the active benevolence of Christ in coming to save a lost world be our great example. Meroz fell under the curse of God, "because they came not to the help of the Lord." (Judges v. 23.) And Christ saith, "He that is not with me is against me."

"Ye who the name of Jesus bear,
His sacred steps pursue,
And let that mind which was in him
Be also found in you."

Come then, pious females, whom God hath blessed with the ability to do good. "How would the wilderness rejoice and blossom as the rose," were you to collect at stated times the uninstructed, and read to them the Gospel of Jesus—cause them to tremble at the awful denunciations against sin, and point them to "the Lamb of God."

You will find many professing Protestants, who seldom attend public worship. Earnestly impress upon them the necessity of punctual attendance. "By the foolishness of preaching God is pleased to save them that believe."

"Great Sun of Righteousness arise,
Bless the dark world with heavenly light;
Thy Gospel makes the simple wise,
Thy laws are pure, Thy judgments right."

We should watch opportunities to do good. Some think, were I rich, were I learned, were I in such a position, I would make great efforts in the cause of Christ. You can read the Bible, you can give a tract; and have not souls been awakened by these simple means? Oh! think upon the value of one soul!

"Knowest thou the value of a soul immortal?
Behold this evening glory, worlds on worlds.
Amazing pomp! Redouble this amaze:
Ten thousand add, and twice ten thousand more:
Then weigh the whole:—one soul outweighs them all,
And calls the great magnificence
Of unintelligent creation *poor*."

What saith the Lord? "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." "Up, then," says a great writer, "every one that has a tongue, and is a servant of Christ, and do something of your Master's work. Why hath He given you a tongue but to speak in His service?" And how can you serve Him more eminently than in saving souls? He that will pronounce you blessed, because you fed Him, in His poor members shall surely pronounce you blessed for bringing souls to His kingdom. No principle of good works is available, but that which is founded on love to the Lord Jesus. But where love is, and the willing mind, Christ will say, "She hath done what she could."

If you have renewed hearts, oh! may they yearn towards the ignorant and ungodly. Say as the lepers of Samaria, "We do not well: this is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." God especially puts this duty on those Christians to whom He has given more influence, and endued with better utterance than others. The strong are to help the weak, and those who see are to direct the blind. God looketh for the faithful improvement of your parts and gifts, which, if you neglect, it were better you had never received them. The families of the clergy are in a position which gives them much influence. Let them be up and doing in this labour of love. "If we cannot give to God one hour of time, how will He give to us the countless ages of eternity?" What will avail the brightest gifts and graces, if they engross all that precious time of which the Great Master hath said, "Occupy till I come?"

"But if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call;
I love my God with such a love,
That I would give them all."

Oh! what a claim has the world on Christian sympathy. "Passing away" is written on everything below, and many around us are passing into eternity who cannot read the Scriptures, and seldom frequent a place of worship. That they are indifferent is no excuse. "Go into the streets and lanes," saith our Lord, "and compel them to come in." Oh! plant the cross of Christ between sinners and eternal woe! "Had I a thousand tongues," says Dr. Haweis, "I would employ them all in spreading the triumphs of Christ's cross." We know that multitudes are "perishing for lack of knowledge." Life's day is short.

"To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfil;
Oh! may it all my powers engage
To do my Maker's will.

Arm me with jealous care,
As in thy sight to live;
And oh! Thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give."

To those who heartily and prayerfully seek to do something for

Christ, success is certain. "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

We know that the Holy Spirit alone can savingly enlighten the soul, yet God works by means.

"As rain on meadows newly mown,
So shall he send His influence down."

The Bible is in our hands, and nearly every conversion may be traced to this mighty engine, breaking down the strongholds of Satan. "Believers," saith St. Peter, "are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever." "Sanctify them through Thy truth," saith our Lord, "Thy Word is truth." Read it prayerfully to the poor.

"Oh! blest are they whose feelings move,
And melt with sympathy and love."

In reading to the poor you may bring comfort to a dying sinner. "Dead in trespasses and sins," is the state of every unrenewed soul. This spiritual death alone can account for the apathy in which many live, and even die—without one fear! "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm." God's Word is the hammer that breaks the stony heart, and lets in Divine light.

THE BALANCE.

So many calls,	So many mercies.
So many wants,	So many gifts.
So many poor,	So many rich.
So many societies,	So much need of them.
So much to do,	So little done.
So many to be helped,	So few to do it.
So much asked,	So little given.
So much talked about,	So little listened to.
So much preaching,	So little practice.

A MOTHER'S DUTIES.

LET it not be thought, by any one who may peruse these pages, that, amidst all this public usefulness, private or family religion were ever neglected. No, her first morning hours were given to her God: early did she pour forth the petitions of her heart to him who heareth and answereth prayer; and no sooner were her own private prayers concluded, than her attention was directed towards those who were committed to her charge. She rose at six in the morning, and at half-past seven assembled her children to read and explain the Scriptures, and to pray with them. She delighted in leading their thoughts to that gracious Saviour who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." She also would frequently pray with her daughters separately, especially if she had observed anything wrong in the course of the day. She would take them aside into her own room, and, with a heart overflowing with all a mother's love, she would point out the sin they had committed, how grievous it was in the sight of God, and how painful to her; and then, taking them by the hand, she would kneel down, and implore the pardoning mercy of God for the past and grace to do better for the future. She also encouraged them in placing the most unreserved confidence in her, and urged them frankly to tell her of anything wrong which they had done when out of her sight. One example of her deep humility will never be effaced from their minds: at a moment when she was particularly engaged, two of them ran into the room to ask her some trifling question. She answered them in a hurried manner, but immediately afterwards retired into her dressing-room, and, after spending some minutes in prayer, returned and expressed her sorrow at having spoken so hastily to them. They felt quite distressed at such an acknowledgement from their mother, but, though then very young, it taught them a lesson of humility which they desire always to keep in mind. Pope indeed states, "that a man should never be ashamed to own that he has been in the wrong, which is saying, in other words, that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday." But excellent as is the precept, it is one very difficult to obey, especially when the confession is to be made by a parent to a child. She also diligently attended to the

religious instruction of her servants ; she would converse with them, read the Scriptures and pray with them, for deeply indeed did she feel her responsibility as a parent and a mistress ; and, knowing the public and unwearied exertions of her beloved husband, she strove to lighten his cares by her diligent attention to duties of a more private character. Often, when he has been called away to advocate the cause of those religious institutions which are the glory of our land, his language has been, "I can leave my home without an anxious thought ;" for well did he know that the spiritual welfare of his children, his household and his people, would be the constant object of her warmest solicitude. She spared herself no fatigue to promote the welfare of the poor. She has been seen on a lecture evening supporting the steps of a poor and very aged Christian up the steep hill which led to the church, thus enabling her to enjoy the privilege of attending the house of God, which she could not do without assistance.—*Home Light : By Rev. W. T. Marsh.*

THE BABE AND HIS FRIENDS.

"And, behold, the babe wept."—EXODUS II. 6.

HERE, dear children is something that is happening every day. Which of you has not heard a little babe cry ? You have an infant brother : he is lying in his cradle by the fire : you want to see how he looks : you lift the clothes from off his little face, and you cannot help smiling, for he is wide awake, blinking his eyes like an owl ! But he sees nothing to smile about. He takes it for granted that you are his nurse or his mother, and he cries to be taken up. It is silly for boys and girls to cry, but it is the only way that babies can express themselves—it is their language.

The text shows us that the babies of distant ages and distant lands, were just like the babies around us now. "And, behold, the babe wept." This babe was born 3425 years ago in Egypt, a country two thousand miles away from England. All those years have rolled by since then, and Egypt is still two thousand miles away from England, but a great many people go to it, for the track of the overland route to India lies through it. The steamers which

leave Southampton twice a month, discharge their passengers at Alexandria, almost within sight of the Pyramids, and then they journey across the Isthmus of Suez on camels to the shore of the Red Sea, where another steamer is waiting to carry them to Bombay or Calcutta.

There are two or three curious things about Egypt. First, it hardly ever rains there: the wind nearly always blows from the south or south-west, and the burning deserts over which it passes on its way to Egypt, drain the air of every drop of moisture, so that there is nothing left for poor thirsty Egypt. Secondly, it is a large country, yet it has only one river. England is far smaller, but it has its Thames, its Severn, its Humber, its Trent, and fifty other rivers. But Egypt has its Nile, and that is all. So, of course, it is a well-known river; and when, in reading about what happened in Egypt, we meet with the words, "The River," we understand at once that it was the Nile, for there was no other. And what a useful river it is! As rain so seldom falls in Egypt, it would be a "waste howling wilderness" without it. It starts, pure and cool, from springs in mountains back in the interior of Africa, so that it never fails. Once a year, in the month of August, it overflows its banks, because the springs send down a double supply of water. The people cut dykes for it to run in hither and thither, and when these are full, they allow it to spread itself all over the land till it looks like a vast lake. Then, when the waters are soaked in, it leaves a coat of mud several inches deep, into which the rice and other seed is cast, and in which it grows very rapidly. This was going on in Pharaoh's day just as it is in ours. So you see their one river is a first-rate one. So much do the Egyptians value it that they worship it. How sad to think that they turn God's good gift to them into an idol!

There is a third remarkable thing about Egypt, it is this—that everything *lasts such a long time there*. You try to preserve anything in England, and the damp and frost soon get to work at it, and it moulders: But in Egypt the atmosphere is clear and mild and dry; so every brick and stone which is made, will last while the world lasts, unless men destroy it: If you doubt this, go the British Museum and look at the Egyptian antiquities: They are the oldest things there—much older than the Grecian and Roman marbles,

many of which are so weather-beaten; but there they are as perfect as if they had just come from the sculptor's yard—you can see the very marks of the chisel! I have stood under an Egyptian obelisk which cast its shadow on the sand before Moses was born: I have held in my hand Egyptian wheat, which may have been gathered by Joseph in the seven years of plenty: I have looked at the mummied faces of men who may have bowed the knee before Joseph as he rode along in the second chariot of Egypt!

But now to come to our subject—

“The babe wept.”

You all know that this babe was a little Hebrew. His father and mother were of the tribe of Levi.—How, then, did he come to be born in Egypt? Let us see. God had told Abraham that “his seed should be strangers in a land which was not theirs”^{*}—that is Egypt. Abraham was then in Canaan, a neighbouring country. There, too, his son Isaac lived and died. There his grandson Jacob was born, and lived the greater part of his life, and it seemed as if he also would die there. But now God's time was come. Joseph was sold by his wicked brothers to a company of Midianite merchants, who carried him down into Egypt: He was bought as a slave by Potiphar: thus he was the first of Abraham's “seed” to fulfil the prophecy. By-and-bye, after many trials, he rose to be Pharaoh's prime minister; and when the famine in Canaan forced his brethren to come to buy corn in Egypt, he made himself known unto them, and sent them back with waggons to bring his old father and themselves, and their wives and their little ones. They settled in Goshen—“the land of flowers”—the best part of Egypt, and soon they grew from 60 souls to 600, and from 600 to 6000, and from 6000 to 60,000, and from 60,000 to 600,000, ay, and thrice 600,000! They were strangers and foreigners there, just as you and I would be in Russia or China; but there they all were, and that was how the Hebrew babe came to be born in Egypt.

And now, being born there, you will notice that he had—first, A very cruel King; secondly, A very tender Mother; thirdly, A very loving Sister; fourthly, A very kind Benefactress.

First, He had a very cruel King.

His name was Pharaoh; not the Pharaoh who was king to Joseph.

^{*} Genesis xv. 13.

He was dead and buried: This Pharaoh was a very different man: We read nothing good of him. He seems to have been awfully proud and hard-hearted, and he had a furious temper: He stopped at no crime if it promised him any advantage: As for God, "He was not in all his thoughts."

Joseph's Pharaoh had invited Jacob and his brethren and their wives and little ones to come down into Egypt, and pick out any land that they pleased. He honoured them above his own people: But things had changed since then: Joseph's kindred had grown into a mighty nation: there were (as we saw just now) nearly two millions of them: they filled the land: they were so industrious that they were getting all the wealth of the country into their hands! Pharaoh was alarmed: he said to the Egyptians, "Come on now, let us deal wisely with this people, lest they multiply, and when there falleth out any war they join unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land." *

He was afraid of them because they were many and mighty, but he was loth to lose them, for they were the making of Egypt. The Egyptians were lazy fellows who did not care for anything but daily food, whilst the Hebrews were all activity and enterprise. "Let us deal wisely with them," he said: What did he mean by that? The next verse tells us. "Let us set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens;" that is, "Let us give them a great deal of work to do—far more than they can accomplish, and let us drive them to do it as if they were cattle: this will break their spirit, and bring them to an early grave." And they did so—"and they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Rameses." The ruins of these cities have, it is believed, been discovered by travellers.—There are the very bricks which the poor Hebrews moulded and laid under the lash of their taskmasters! But Pharaoh's plan did not succeed: The more they afflicted them, the more they grew; and Pharaoh was "grieved" on account of them. What should he try next?

As I said, he stood at no crime which promised him any advantage: "What! will he murder any one?" Yes, dear children, indeed he will. "Will he murder an innocent babe?" Yes, indeed. "Will he murder more than one?" Yes, he will murder any number if it be necessary: He gives forth a decree, that every

* Exodus i. 10.

man-child which a Hebrew woman has is to be cast into the river! He charged all his people to see that it was done! Herod was bad enough—he “sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under;” but Bethlehem was only a little town, and directly the slaughter was over the sword was sheathed. But Pharaoh made it a law of the land—a standing law for a whole nation! In London there are about 1700 births a week—85,000 children are born in London alone every year: Half of these are boys. Now, supposing that the Hebrews were as many as the inhabitants of London, here would have been 40,000 little boys and more to be flung into the Nile every year! Pharaoh was ready to murder 40,000 helpless babes every year. Whether they were put to death or not does not matter. He meant them to be, therefore their blood rested on his head. Was he not a CRUEL king? What a mercy it is, dear children, that we live in a country where an Infant’s life is as sacred as a Prince’s—where it is death to blow out the “little taper” which God himself has kindled—where the Queen, instead of injuring her children-subjects, gives money to build them schools, and kisses her fair hand to them as she drives through their midst, and returns their boisterous salutations with gracious smiles!

What a still greater mercy it is that the KING OF KINGS loves little children! We might think that, being so great as he is, and having so much to attend to, he would overlook them. But, oh, not so! He does not “despise one of these little ones who believe in him.”* He will not let one of them perish: “He gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom.”† He does not say, “Cast them into the river,” but, “Suffer the little children to come unto me.” So we are not afraid to bring the youngest and weakest of babes and put it into his arms—we do so at its baptism. We know that he shed his precious blood for it; no mother need hide her little ones from him.

How he must abhor all those who shed infant blood! See how he visited Pharaoh’s guilt upon his head even in this world! He gave him over to Satan; he turned all the water of the river into which he had ordered the little ones to be flung, into blood before his eyes; he made his food loathsome with flies; he filled his palace

* Matthew xviii. 10.

† Isaiah xl. 11.

with slimy frogs; he covered his body with boils and blains; he killed his cattle with hailstones; he destroyed his grain and fruit with locusts; he shrouded him for days in blackest darkness; he terrified him with such thunder and lightning as was never known before or since; he slew his own first-born son—the heir of his throne! and then, at last, he overwhelmed him and his hosts in the Red Sea, so that there was not one of them left!

Thus God avenged the wrongs of those innocent children!

"WHY STAND YE HERE ALL THE DAY IDLE?"

THERE are many reasons why you should not. In the first place, it will make you *unhappy*. "Of all the cankers of human happiness," says Mr Jefferson in a letter addressed to his daughter, "there is none which corrodes so quietly, and yet so surely, as indolence." If this be true of the worldling, it is pre-eminently true of the Christian. Occupation to the man of the world is a mere relief from *ennui*, a riddance from himself; to the Christian it is the highest source of enjoyment. And so while indolence inflicts only weariness on this world's votary, in the case of the Christian it adds to this the painful sense of unfaithfulness to his trust.

In the next place it is dangerous. We are told that when the unclean spirit, on returning to his house, found it swept and garnished, he went and brought seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they entered in and dwelt there; and the last state of that man was worse than the first. Every one's experience confirms the truth expressed in the simple lines—

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

If, then, we would sincerely pray, "Lead me not into temptation," we must obey the apostolic injunction and be "not slothful in business."

In the third place, idleness is inconsistent with an honest and hearty reception of the Gospel. "If any man will come after me," says the Saviour, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily

and follow Me." Follow Him, the record of whose life is, that He "went about doing good;" whose first recorded words were, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and whose last exclamation on the cross was—"It is finished!" And this example of our Lord is confirmed by his precepts, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature;" and again, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." What unremitting labour does obedience to these commands involve! And yet, "He that loveth Me keepeth my commandments."

SUFFERINGS OF THE JEWS.*

WE have heard much that is pleasing of Edward I. (though with some things displeasing), and are sorry to reverse the picture, and to show the injustice and ambition which led him into wars which were useless to his subjects, and the cause of great misery to his neighbors.

He longed for conquests, but he did not wish to render himself unpopular by heavy taxes. How could he raise the needful money? There was one race of people among his subjects, whose portion had long been oppression and wrong. What heart would blame, what hand would be raised to stay, any injury to *these*, the offscouring of all? † No eye but the eye of God would take note of their wrongs, and of that eye Edward thought but little. Probably his teachers led him to believe he would serve the Lord by ill-treating God's ancient people. The Church of Rome understood not, that, though forsaken indeed, because of their sins, for a little moment, they were yet to be gathered with everlasting mercies. ‡

Many of the Jews were rich, and often their gold was ill-gotten. They had learned to think themselves at liberty to cheat the Gentiles, if only they were just and kind to each other. At that time 300 Jews had been hung for clipping the coin of the realm. This crime, whether in Jew or Gentile, was then punished with death. These 300 persons might be all guilty, but Edward made this

* From "My Country." Part 2.

† Lamentations iii. 45.

‡ Isaiah liv. 7—10.

an excuse for punishing the whole people, by seizing their property, and ordering them all to leave the kingdom.*

It is painful to think what sufferings these Jews—about fifteen thousand in number—must have undergone, when thus suddenly driven, almost penniless, among strangers, who hated the very name of Jew. They did not return to England for about 350 years, and the Lombards, from Italy, took their place as money-lenders in England. A street in London is still called after them.

HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP.

THE last sleep God giveth His beloved, is the sleep of a happy dismission. I have stood by the graves of many servants of the Lord; I have buried some of the excellent of the earth; and when I bid farewell to my brother down below there, slumbering in his coffin, I usually commenced my speech with those words, "So He giveth His beloved sleep." Dear servants of Jesus! There I see them! What can I say of them, but that "so He giveth His beloved sleep?" Oh! happy sleep! This world is a state of tossing to and fro; but in that grave they rest. No sorrows there; no sighs, no groans, to mingle with the songs that warble from immortal tongues. Well may I address the dead thus:—"My brother, oftentimes hast thou fought the battles of this world; thou hast had thy cares, thy trials, and thy troubles; but now thou art gone—not to worlds unknown, but to yonder land of light and glory. Sleep on, brother! Thy soul sleepeth not, for thou art in heaven; but thy body sleepeth. Death hath laid thee in thy last couch; on the resurrection morning, when the archangel shall set his trumpet to his mouth, thou shalt rise. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Sleep on in thy grave, my brother, for thou shalt rise to glory. "So He giveth his beloved sleep."

Beloved Christian brother, wherefore dost thou fear to die? Come let me take thy hand:

"To you and me by grace 'tis given,
To know the Saviour's precious name;
And shortly we shall meet in heaven,
Our end, our hope, our way the same."

* A.D. 1283.

Do you know that heaven is just across that narrow stream? Are you afraid to plunge in and swim across? Do you fear to be drowned? I feel the bottom—it is good. Dost thou think thou shalt sink? Hear the voice of the Spirit: "Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God: when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Death is the gate of endless joys, and dost thou dread to enter there? What! fear to be emancipated from corruption? Oh! say not so; but, rather, gladly lay down and sleep in Jesus, and be blessed.

MEMORIAL LINES.

WE loved, and still we love thee. What can sever
 This holy bond? The spirit is not dust;
 Sweet is thy memory in the soul for ever,
 And fondly guarded as a sacred trust.
 Dear was thy living image when before us
 It stood in all thy youthful beauty's glow,
 Yet still more dear thy spirit hovering o'er us
 With the bright crown of glory on its brow.

How oft the weary heart, its grief dissembling,
 Sees the calm smile upon thy features still,
 And hears along its chords, like music trembling,
 The low, clear notes to which it once would thrill!
 The vision fades,—we feel we are forsaken,
 The gloom returns, the anguish and the care,—
 And tender longings in the heart awaken,
 Which wish thee here, though thou art happier there.

Alas! how far the Past outweighs the Present,—
 The forms that come no more the friends we see;
 How the lone spirit feels 'tis far less pleasant
 To smile with others than to weep for thee!
 Yet, in the struggle of its silent sorrow,
 The pining heart can sometimes break its chain,
 And from the Saviour's word this hope may borrow,—
 Beloved! we shall see thee yet again.

J. D. BURNS.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

A SERMON

PREACHED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JAN. 8, 1860,
BY THE REV. H. MELVILL, B.D.,
(*Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty, and Canon Residentary.*)
AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL'S, LONDON.

"When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me."—JOHN v. 6, 7.

It is generally admitted that a significative character belongs to the miracles of our Lord, so that they partake of the nature of parables, doctrines being taught in and through the wonders that are performed. But it is not always easy to define with precision the significative character of a recorded transaction. At least, if we may trace it in general outline, there is difficulty in following it out in minor particulars. This is the case for example with the Scripture narrative, a portion of which we have selected as our text; it is the narrative of our Lord's healing the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, and whilst no one has any difficulty in admitting that the sudden walking of the cripple may represent the renovation of those whom sin has incapacitated for spiritual exercise, every one must feel at a loss in explaining and making significative what is told us in regard to the pool and its waters. The evangelist simply states that there was at Jerusalem, by the sheep market, a pool called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. The word Bethesda denotes, it is supposed, the house of effusion, or, perhaps, more accurately, the house of compassion, and the porches appear to have been cloisters occupied by a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, who had been brought thither by their friends, in the hope and expectation of obtaining a cure through the virtues of the pool. But now, the narrative becomes strange and obscure. We are told that at a certain season, probably at some one or more of the great Jewish festivals, an angel was wont to descend and trouble the water, and that whichever of the diseased multitude first stepped into the pool, after the troubling of the waters, was immediately made whole of whatsoever disease he had. The evangelist tells us nothing more in regard to the pool, leaving us entirely in the dark as to whether the miraculous energy were of recent communication, or whether it had been possessed from all time, and having no explanation of the advent of the angel it increases the difficulty that no information is to be had from other sources. Josephus, the great Jewish

Mother's Magazine, March, 1860,

historian, is utterly silent as to this wonderful pool, though the mention of it would have redounded to the credit of the city and nation. The remainder of the narrative is comparatively free from difficulty. There was one poor cripple who, for thirty and eight years, had been regularly brought to the pool at the time when the descent of the angel was expected; but the healing virtue of the waters took effect in regard of only one individual at any one troubling—he that first stepped in was healed, but he alone. There must of course have been great contests among the diseased as to who first should reach the miraculous bath, and no wonder if, in such contests, an impotent man had failed of success. Every year must have diminished the likelihood of his cure. He becomes more infirm, and by his own account he seems to have been friendless; still he would not desert the porches of Bethesda, and at length he was recompensed for his waiting, though in a manner wholly unexpected. His case attracted the notice of the compassionate Jesus, who, having inquired whether he wished to be made whole, bade him arise, take up his bed, and walk; and the word was with power, and the cripple found himself able to obey, rose, took up his bed, and departed to his house.

Such is the narrative which we desire to illustrate, and from which we hope to derive important lessons on the present occasion. Our object is twofold. We shall endeavor, in the first place, to give some probable account of what is mysterious in this history of the pool of Bethesda, and the descent of the angel. Then, in the second place, we shall consider the whole transaction as emblematic or significative, and seek to draw from it truths of peculiar worth to ourselves.

I. Now, you will readily conjecture that in the absence of information, whether from profane or sacred historians, this pool of Bethesda has marvellously exercised the ingenuity of commentators, so that it will be no easy thing to lay before you their several opinions. We shall not occupy your time with a production of conflicting accounts, but simply state, with as much perspicuity as possible what appears the most satisfactory explanation of this confessedly difficult narrative. It appears the pool of Bethesda is placed by the evangelist near the sheep market, or sheep-gate, in Jerusalem. You read of this sheep-gate in the book of Nehemiah, where that great benefactor to his nation has been taking a survey of the desolate city and the number of its gates. It would seem, moreover, from Josephus, that near one of the gates of Jerusalem, which agrees with the sheep-gate of Nehemiah, was a pool commonly known as Solomon's pool, and we conclude, therefore, with good reason, that the pool described by Josephus as the pool of Solomon, is that described by St. John as the pool of Bethesda. But the pool of Solomon derived its waters from the fountain of Siloam, or Shiloh, a fountain which also fed another pool on the west of the city, bearing the name of its source, "The pool of Siloam," to which, as though to show that all the waters from one fountain were in a great measure sacred, Christ, you will remember, sent the blind man to wash, whose eyes were anointed with clay. This then is distinctly to be observed. According to our best accounts of the localities of Jerusalem, the Bethesda waters were conducted thither from the fountain of Siloam; so that, if there were anything medicinal or significative about this fountain, there must have been also something medicinal or significative about the waters of Bethesda. But, you say, have we any right to ascribe a medicinal

character to the fountain of Siloam—any right, we mean, from Scripture? Well, if you turn to the prophecies of Isaiah, you will find that the waters of Siloam, or Shiloh, which is but the same word, are used to represent the kingdom of David, which is itself emblematic of the kingdom of Christ. This is the passage, “Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloh that go softly;”—which is as much as to say, “Forasmuch as the Israelite rejected the mild government of David and his posterity,” for this might be likened for its gentleness to the soft-flowing waters of Siloam. Thus, therefore, the waters of Siloam, and therefore, also, those of Bethesda, had been selected to betoken the kingdom of David, the great type of the Messiah. Accordingly, the Jews themselves attached a sacred character to these waters, for they drew and poured them out at the feast of the Tabernacles, applying to them, in the course of a high solemnity, the words of the prophet, “With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation.”

Now, thus far have we observed the advanced facts, and kept ourselves wholly free from conjecture. We have sufficient historical and scriptural evidence for regarding the waters of the pool of Bethesda as an appointed emblem of the kingdom of Christ, and as so considered by the Jews themselves. But now, we may rest a conjecture on this fact; may we not think that forasmuch as these waters foreshadowed the kingdom of Christ, God was pleased when that kingdom was nigh at hand, to endue the waters with healing power, as though to give notice of the nearness of the days of the Messiah, and of the restorative virtue which the Messiah would exert? There can hardly be imagined anything more strikingly significative, if you allow the probability of this conjecture. Here were waters, which from early days, and on the authority of the Almighty himself, had been regarded as emblematic of the kingdom of Christ; but nevertheless, there had been nothing peculiar in the waters—nothing to distinguish them from those which welled forth from any other fountain. Certainly, however, as the time approaches which prophecy had fixed for the birth of Christ, an angel descends, agitates these waters, and then it is found that the pool is possessed of miraculous energy. What could better direct attention to the nearness of the Christ? What could more aptly set forth his offices? Thus, as we think, you have a uniform and consistent account of one of the most obscure of the Scriptural narratives; for it is to be remembered, that a long season was to elapse between the closing of the Old Testament canon, and the dawning of the days of the Messiah. More than 400 years were to pass from the time when Malachi shut up the prophetic announcements with the promise that Elijah should come, appearing in the flesh—the desire of all nations; and this long interval was to be cheered by no fresh communications from above. No mysterious vision, gorgeous with prospects of the future, was to pass before gifted seers; no successors to such men as Moses and Samuel were to work wonders to keep alive the faith and expectation of the people. It was an interval during which, if you contrast it with other periods of the Jewish dispensation, periods rich in prophecy and rife with miracles, it might have seemed as though God had forsaken the people. Certainly, he left them to ponder former revelations, and vouchsafed no fresh instructions whether through voice, or vision, or sign.

But when the time was at hand for the birth of Christ, the long suspended

communications were reopened. Prodiges began again, for an angel descended and Zacharius was struck dumb. Prophecy recommenced, for events were predicted which could happen only against the course and custom of nature. Yes, these indeed were strong and explicit attestations to the people of Israel that the long night of apparent desertion was now about to terminate; attestations which could hardly have been overlooked or misinterpreted. But why not add to those attestations, that one furnished by the virtues of the pool of Bethesda? Here, too, an angel descended in token of the return of visible intercourse between earth and heaven. Here, too, miracles were wrought and events of superhuman power were again to be vouchsafed. The cripple had lain for thirty and eight years in the porch, and it is not unlikely that the attendance commenced when the waters became healing. This would place the first advent of the angel about seven years before the birth of our Lord, just when it might have been expected that the heraldry of his approach would begin. And though you know not in what way attention was first drawn to the advent of the angel and his troubling the waters, yet you read in St. Luke of the falling of the tower in Siloam, so that very probably there was an earthquake, the common signal of supernatural visitations; and the earthquake, by overthrowing the tower in Siloam, may have directed attention to the waters already held sacred, and then the angelic presence would teach that they had now become healing. But whether or not there be correctness in these minuter suppositions, we bring out from the general narrative as striking an intimation as well can be imagined that God was about to visit the people. The waters of Siloam had long flowed softly, imaging that government beneath which it may be emphatically said that "God's gentleness hath made us great," and the Israelite had gazed on these waters, regarding them as prophetic of the kingdom of his Lord, but there had been no ruffle on their surface indicative of change or declarative that the Spirit of the Most High was brooding upon them, to extract, as at the first, a new and beautiful creation. But lo, suddenly, the Lord's voice is in the earthquake; a mysterious form is hovering over the pool of Bethesda; the waters, hitherto so calm are supernaturally agitated; henceforward they have power to heal all varieties of disease. Oh, people of Judah, exult in the approach of your King!

Can you fail to learn from this, that he on whose shoulders shall be the government is at length about to appear, and that when he appears it will be to vindicate the prophetic description of the Messiah, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses?"

II. Now, we pass from endeavouring to explain the more difficult parts of the narrative, to considering the whole transaction as significative. We have, indeed, already assigned a symbolical character to the troubling of the waters, but one specially interesting to the Jew, and only remotely affecting ourselves. And now we wish to see whether, besides this, and over and above the general typical features which we may detect, there be not significative circumstances in the history from which, as Christians, we may draw great practical lessons.

Observe, then, that it was only at certain seasons that the angel descended, and only the individual who was instantly on the alert to take advantage of the troubling of the waters that became healed of his infirmities. The waters were

not at all times equally efficacious, and the dilatory, by letting slip an opportunity, ran no inconsiderable risk of remaining uncured up to the day of their death. Now we do not mean to say that there is any moment at which men can turn in repentance unto God, and find him unwilling to receive them. I do not mean to say of the fountain open for sin and uncleanness, that like the pool of Bethesda, it is healing only at certain times, and loses its power when stated solemnities have passed. Blessed be God, the fountain is ever equally efficacious; at any moment, in any land, the sinful may bathe therein and be whole. But, nevertheless, there are precious opportunities in every man's life, turning points as we may well call them, on the taking advantage of which may altogether depend his final salvation. So far as we ourselves are individually concerned, the troubling of the waters is an occasional rather than a permanent thing. The point to be observed is, that if we be not on the watch for that troubling of the waters, and if we do not, as soon as it takes place, endeavour to avail ourselves of those motions, we are likely to die in the porches of Bethesda, with the sickness of the soul altogether unrelieved. I think that all of you, even those the least observant of what passes in themselves, must be conscious that there are moments when a desire after salvation is excited; when a secret impulse urges to prayer, to the study of the Scriptures, or to the forsaking evil courses. It is a matter of no moment at all, whether they can point out an instrumentality through which conscience has been aroused, or whether the process has been hidden and discovered only by results, it matters nothing; that is, to borrow an imagery from our text, it matters nothing whether the angel may have descended in visible shape to trouble the waters, or whether the messenger was unseen, and the visit could be known only by the agitation produced. There may be doubt as to the instrumentality, there can be none as to the fact that the waters are troubled. In every excited fear of the vengeance of God, in every impulse which would send you to your knees, in every brief aspiration after holiness and heaven, you have tokens that the angel has been with you, summoning you to be heedful, and not to lose the opportunity which may, perhaps, be the last. And if you take not advantage of the troubling of the waters, if, that is, when you feel prompted to pray, you omit to pray; when made conscious of the evil of a practice, you do not forthwith set yourselves to correct that practice; and when moved to the study of the Scriptures, you defer that study to a more convenient season, why, there is more than a probability that you will not soon again be visited with the desire after salvation, and that even when so visited, it will be in less measure; for the Spirit of God, who is the actual agent, whatever the instrumentality employed in troubling the waters, is grieved and provoked by resistance to his influences, and may be tempted altogether to withdraw, when he has striven with you, and agitated you in vain. There is much to make us believe that these, our Sunday assemblings, are seasons to many of the troubling of the waters, and, nevertheless, not seasons of the restoration of health, because the agitation is allowed to subside in place of being taken advantage of so soon as excited. We now proclaim that the Lord God Almighty is not to be trifled with. "He hath appointed a day on the which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man Christ Jesus;" and those who turn not to him with weeping and prayer, and break not off from evil courses,

must have their portion with the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched. Terrible announcement! It may be that all do not hear it unmoved. There may be a conscience which is startled, there may be a heart which trembles. If there be, then, with such an individual, it is the sign of the troubling of the waters—the angel commissioned from above, has come down upon the stagnant pool, and the ruffled surface gives evidence of his presence; and there ought not to be the pause of a moment. Now, whilst the individual is yet in the sanctuary of God, should his heart ascend in prayer for divine grace; now should he form an earnest resolution of thorough amendment, and so soon as he leaves the church, he should set about carrying the resolution into effect—not pausing to consider, whether he can indeed part with the right eye, or the right hand, but instantly commencing the excision of the one, or the amputation of the other. And, if he do this, we can then promise him, that he will make an advance towards the waters of healing, and that, by God's help, he shall, ere long, regain moral strength. But, if he will not do this—if, on the contrary, he quiet conscience by some specious promise, and defer, for a while, the acting on the produced sense of what is right—alas! there is too great cause for fear that, though on successive Sundays the angel will be engaged in troubling the waters, it will only be for those who are more active and more resolute than himself. Week after week, and year after year, he may resort to the porches of Bethesda; but having lived in the midst of those who are being healed through the flowing from Siloam, he may die in his sickness, a melancholy evidence, that not to be on the alert when the pool is disturbed, is the sure way to perpetuate disease, and to provoke destruction.

Now, the lesson we have just considered, as illustrated and taught in the narrative before us, is as important as it is simple. We are of course aware that we have somewhat departed from the imagery of the passage, inasmuch as we have supposed the angel to trouble the waters of the conscience or the heart, rather than the waters of that fountain in which men could be healed. But this is of no moment in a practical point of view. The lesson comes out clear and distinct, that in religion everything depends on taking immediate advantage of the suggestions and emotions of God's spirit, seeing that the visitations of grace are only occasional, and there is no pledge that a neglected opportunity will ever be followed by another. But now, suppose I direct your attention to another great truth, which may be equally evolved from the history before us. There is something singular in the question which Christ proposed to the cripple, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Art thou willing to be made whole? He asked for nothing but a readiness to be cured; and on receiving an answer expressive of that readiness, he proceeded forthwith to the working of the miracle. I shall not stay to enter into that part of the question. Supposing we could not give it a specific meaning, we will only say it is no idle question even then. The man might have found it a profitable thing to be maimed. There is many a cripple in the streets of our city, who lives by being a cripple, and who would be sorely grieved if his limbs were restored. With habits such as his, he would infinitely prefer the begging with one arm, than the working with two. But as soon as the whole subject is considered as symbolical the question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" suggests a truth which deserves, on every account, the being carefully

pondered. There may be the lying in our moral sickness by the fountain with no real wish to have the sickness removed; there may be the coming up to God's house, like the resorting of the cripple to Bethesda's porches; but there may be good reason for repeating the question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" and the true answer wrung from the heart would often be, "I will not." Wilt thou be made whole, young man, who art the slave of thy passions, and whose god is pleasure? Ah! think what it is to be made whole. It is to mortify thy passions; it is to deny thyself; it is to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world; yea, think what it is before you pronounce it to be what you wish. Wilt thou be made whole, man of more advanced years, with whom to get gain or distinction is the daily toil and the nightly thought? Think what it is to be made whole; it is to flee from covetousness as from idolatry; it is to count all things loss for Christ. Be quite sure that you understand what it is to be whole before you assume that you prefer it to the being diseased. Or wilt thou be made whole, woman of frivolous and dissipated tastes, whose longing is for admiration, whose labour is for display? Think what it is to be made whole. It is to have the conversation in heaven; it is to have the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; it is to be clothed with humility; it is to love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. Ah! pause a while to consider what it is to be whole. You may, probably, decide against the being cured. Yes, it is a secret unwillingness which frustrates the ordinance of grace, and keeps our Bethesda still crowded with the halt, the withered, and the blind. If the question to the sinner were, "Wilt thou be saved?" there would be no diffidence, and no hesitation in the answer; but the question is not simply, "Wilt thou be saved from the punishment of sin?" it is, "Wilt thou be saved from the punishment of sin by being saved from the power of sin?" It is this about which the sinner secretly hesitates—his pleasure is in sin. To forsake sin is to forsake his favourite pursuits; to be healed, is to be wounded just where he is most sensitive; and therefore he may come to the pool of Bethesda, but not to watch, and wait the auspicious moment, when the messenger from heaven shall stir the stagnant waters. He secretly dreads the stirring of the waters; and whenever he finds them agitated, he pours upon them the oil of some flattering deceit, instead of availing himself of the troubling, and making a struggle for health. Then, be it known to those who, Sunday after Sunday, flock to Bethesda and go away uncured, that God, who detests and hates hypocrisy in every degree, and in every disguise, requires of them that the heart speak the same as the profession, that they examine whether they indeed wish for that of which their presence in his house seems to announce them desirous. Let each see whether he be indeed ready to undergo a moral change, a change from self-indulgence to self-denial, from gratified to mortified appetites, from mixing with the world to separation from the world; and if the crowd in the porches of our Bethesda can affirm such readiness in themselves, let them learn that their continuing unrenewed, and therefore exposed to everlasting wrath, is not because the angel cometh not down at stated solemnities, and not because the healing virtue has departed from the waters of Siloam, but because deceitful as they are, though detected by God, they professed externally that they would fain be rid of sickness,

and yet in the heart reply only in the negative to the question of our Lord, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

We have pressed upon you the importance, if, indeed, you truly desire to be cured of your infirmity, of taking advantage of each troubling of the waters, and of instantly obeying every impulse and acting on every suggestion of God's Spirit. And now, before we conclude, let us add, that you should imitate the man whose history we have been reviewing, who was not wearied out by repeated disappointments. Men may come up Sunday after Sunday to the house of Lord, and though they listen with all readiness to the preaching of the word, may depart with apparently no spiritual benefit. They may be diligent in reading their Bibles, but chapter after chapter may be perused, and yet no influence go forth on their stagnant affections; they may be fervent in prayer, yet supplication after supplication may ascend towards heaven and no Spirit seem to come down in return to brood over the waters. But let them not be weary in well-doing; let them not forsake the public assembly because the office of the angel appears not to be exerted on their behalf. Let them not close the Bible because its page has not yet been lit with supernatural fire; let them not cease from prayer because hitherto their prayers have been apparently unanswered. You may be giving up in despair at the very moment when God, having duly exercised your patience, is about to interpose and heal you with the word. Oh, if the poor cripple, weary with having gone thirty and seven years in vain had stayed away from Bethesda in the thirty-eight year of sickness, he would just have missed Christ, and must have carried that sickness to his grave. The greatest promises of Scripture are to those that wait upon the Lord, and the revelation of the last judgment alone can decide how many through waiting a certain time have not been far from the kingdom of heaven, and then, through not waiting a longer time, have sunk down into everlasting shame. And oh! what encouragement was there to wait at the pool of Bethesda, which was at Jerusalem? One, only one, out of the anxious crowd of the halt and the blind could be cured in successive descents of the angel. Numbers might be on the alert, numbers might be willing, but a solitary individual obtained the benefit. Not so with the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. If I were enabled to trouble the waters in every one in this assembly, to excite in every heart the desire for salvation, why the whole mass might press together to the life-giving stream, and depart from the place walking and leaping and praising God. Myriads have bathed and been made whole, and there is the same efficacy as at the first, so that myriads more may obtain the same blessing. Continue, then, to wait upon God in the diligent use of instituted means, and sooner or later shall the Redeemer single you out from the throng, and speaking to you as he spoke to the cripple in our text, both command and enable you to walk in the way that leadeth unto life.

Sketches and Essays.

REBEKAH.

Excuses may be made, and excuses ought on justice to be made for her, for we must recollect that not only gospel light and morality were then unknown, but even the law of Moses had not yet been promulgated; and we have no right to judge the servant of another for failure or omission, until we know whether any commandment or prohibition had been revealed on the subject. Still, there can be no doubt that it was faith in God's promise, and intelligence concerning his revealed purposes, that instigated her to act as she did; though a more simple faith, and a fuller assurance that what he had purposed he was able to perform, and would perform, would rather have led her to fervent prayer, and to the pleading of those promises, than to the statagem by which she brought about the desire of her heart.

The time had been, when, being in perplexity and trouble she went to enquire of the Lord; and she seems to have enjoyed the peculiar privilege, seldom vouchsafed to one of her sex, of receiving a direct answer from Jehovah to her petition, and a clear promise and intimation of the future history and destiny of her two sons.

The same throne of grace was open to her now, and even greater boldness would have been becoming her; because, not only as in the former case had she her desire to make known, but she had a full and direct promise to plead. That promise was, that her younger son should be stronger than the elder, and that the elder should serve the younger.

When, therefore, she perceived that her husband's affections were fixed on Esau, and that he intended to give him his dying blessing, which would entail on him all the promises belonging to the younger son,—the true and perfect course for Rebekah would have been, again to make supplication to him who had promised, and to plead with him to make her word good.

And, wherefore did Rebekah act otherwise? The reason seems to be, that having believed she understood the Lord's prediction, she threw her whole soul into him; and, in desiring their fulfilment,

The Mother's Magazine. April, 1860.

D

she fixed her affections on him who was the subject of them; and having done this, she desired Jacob to obtain the blessing, not only because the Lord loved him, but because she herself loved him.

It is written, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body is full of light," and as long as we keep this rule in view, we shall not be tempted to turn aside into crooked paths. We shall not only desire that which is God's will, but we shall use no means to accomplish that will, except such as are according to truth, simplicity, and uprightness. We shall not be willing to go one step to the right or left, nor to do evil that good may come.

In ordinary cases, it requires only ordinary integrity and moral rectitude to speak the truth, and to walk in the paths of uprightness. Occasions do occur sometimes, suddenly and unexpectedly, in which the choice seems to be between a great evil, and a small deviation from the right path. Thus, Rebekah thought that if she did not frame her deceit, and persuade Jacob to practice it, the whole tide of promised blessing would flow away from the godly Jacob, and centre on the profane Esau. But sad as the alternative seemed, faith might have whispered, "What God has promised, he is able to perform; and that faith would have been counted to her for righteousness."

A Christian lady, some years ago, was placed in somewhat similar circumstances; she had been converted subsequently to her marriage and her husband still remained an enemy to the truth. Her life from henceforth was one of petty persecutions of various kinds, for her husband omitted no opportunity of crossing her will, and of trying to make her act contrary to her conscience.

These persecutions instead of overcoming her faith, caused her to walk more simply and closely with God; and she was enabled to do many things in simplicity, as acts of obedience to her husband for the Lord's sake, which she would not have done to please herself, without stepping out of her Christian character. She would sit at the head of his table when the house was filled with his gay companions, and be courteous to all; but she would also speak of the Lord to those who sat next her, in spite of her husband's frown.

Years rolled on, and her husband's enmity was unabated; but her children were beginning to grow up around her, and in them she hoped to find a solace for all her sorrows. She trusted to be per-

mitted to lead them to the foot of the Cross, and to find in their infant hearts, the response of faith and love so pleasing to the Lord, so cheering to the Christian parent.

At this time her husband, who had in vain persevered in every plan of personal annoyance, and found himself constantly foiled by the grace which had enabled her ever to yield, whatever could be yielded with a good conscience, bethought himself of a new trial of her steadfastness.

One day, entering her sitting room, he found her with her Bible before her, and her little sons clustering round her, drinking in from her lips the words of eternal life.

"I can never suffer this," he cried; "I won't have my boys brought up to be Methodists. You must solemnly promise me you will never again speak a word to any of them on religion, or I will take them away from you, and have them educated as I please, and you shall never see them again."

Great was the consternation of the unhappy mother, for she had no reason to believe that her husband would recede from his threat. She could make no immediate reply, but after mature thought, she resolved to abide by her husband's conditions. She was well able to educate her boys herself, and she determined never to send them to school, hoping that her example and her prayers might avail for their conversion; even though her lips were evermore to be sealed on the one subject nearest her heart.

She, therefore, gave her fatal promise and kept it. Year after year passed on, and her boys never heard from her lips the glad tidings of salvation. But from their father's, they imbibed principles of infidelity which blasted all her hopes. From him they were taught to scoff at their mother's faith, and to rush into pleasures in which she could have no part.

What would have been the result, had she acted differently when the hour of temptation first arrived, it is impossible to say what she would then have had to reproach herself with. Had she said to her husband, "God, who gave me these children, commands me to bring them up in his ways, to teach them out of his word, and to lead them into his truth. I ought to obey God rather than man; and though I willingly obey you in all lawful things, that is not lawful, I cannot obey you in it."

The Lord would have been on her side, as she would have been on his; and he would have softened her husband's heart, so as to cause him to alter his resolve, or else if her children had been taken out of her hand, she would have felt that duties were hers, and results with him whose ears would ever have been open to her prayers for the poor lost ones.

Whereas, in the path she chose she neither had a clear conscience, nor even the satisfaction, like Rebekah of old, to feel that her derilection from the path of duty, had been attended with blessing to those for whose sake she had erred.

May we never be thus tried! But if we should be, let us seek grace to keep the straight and narrow path of Christian duty, before the most specious schemes of human expediency.

THE BABE AND HIS FRIENDS.

(Concluded from page 61.)

HE had a very tender mother, whose name was Jochebed. Being Hebrews, both herself and her husband were Pharaoh's slaves, and the barbarous decree hung over them. Jochebed was about to have a child: "What shall I do," she would say, "if it should be a little boy?—Must I cast it into the river?—Can I kill my own child?"

The child was born, and it *was* a little boy! But when she looked at him and saw what a goodly child he was—how strong, how beautiful, she soon made up her mind to keep him alive even if she was herself put to death for it. Yes, she knew that if she was found out she would be brought before the tyrant, Pharaoh, and there was no pity in his heart. But her affection was stronger than her fear; so she hid the babe in the house for three months—perhaps in a cupboard, perhaps in a box, perhaps under the bed; and hard work she must have had to feed and wash him all that time! How she would steal in and out when no one was looking! And every day as he grew bigger and heartier, he would become more of a burden to her poor spirit! She would be fonder and fonder

of him—but this only increased her trouble. “What if he should be torn from me now!—What if some spy should discover him, and inform against him?—How can I possibly keep him out of sight when he begins to run alone?” Like all babies, he would get put out sometimes, and scream so loud that she fancied half the city heard him; and, I dare say, many people did, and it began to be talked about; so she had no time to lose.

Seeing that “she could no longer hide him,” she resolved to cast him upon God—to commit him to His merciful providence. She believed that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowing it,—that every hair of her baby-boy’s head was numbered; and if so, He would raise him up a friend in need who would be a friend indeed to him. “I will make him a little ark of bulrushes,” she said—“I will daub it with tar, so that it will be water tight; then I will put him into it, and lay him in the flags of the river, just where people come to bathe:—then, I have done all I can; the rest I must leave to the God of my fathers. Who can tell but that some one may find and pity the child, and take him for their own? If not,—if he perishes, God’s will be done!” Ah! who can describe that mother’s feelings, as her hand twisted the bulrushes: What sighs must have rushed from her bosom: What scalding tears must have trickled down her cheeks! At last, the ark was finished. Noah’s ark took a hundred and twenty years to build; hers, scarcely a day: Noah’s ark was to have eight men and women and many thousands of animals in it; hers, one little babe: but, like Noah’s ark, it was able to float if the tide rose, or the wind carried it out into the stream. She folded up his little wardrobe so as to form a warm nest for him, and now she brought him out of his hiding-place, and, giving him one long, long kiss, put him in, and fastened down the lid. Then she carried the ark, with as heavy a heart as if it had been his tiny coffin, to the “river’s brink, and laid it in the flags:” Then, having set his sister to watch it, she went home—we may suppose, to pray.

How dependent children are on the kindness of others! Had Jochebed been like the Chinese mothers, she would have cast little Moses into the river without a pang. They actually bury their children alive if they want to get rid of them, or they put out their eyes, that they may excite pity from the passers-by in the streets!

There are little Chinese girls in England now who will never see the light of the sun: they were offered for sale to a kind missionary, who brought them over to train them for Jesus.

How completely all of us are in the hands of our parents! They could give us scanty food, and scanty clothing; they could give us wrong medicine, or no medicine when we are ill; they could teach us wicked words and wicked ways: And alas; we know that some fathers and mothers are bad enough for anything! How thankful then you should feel if God has blessed you with good parents. They can do what they please with you, and by His blessing it is their pleasure to give you everything you need—to gather you under their wings—to rejoice with you when you rejoice—to guide your youthful feet aright—to enrich you with whatever is “lovely and of good report!” If you have such parents as these, you need not envy the children of kings!

Notice, he had a very loving sister; her name was Miriam. She was several years older than he was, in fact she was quite a grown-up girl. Like her mother, she was for saving the baby-boy; so she helped to hide him away for three months, and when that could be done no longer, she helped her to make the ark; she would gather the bulrushes, and collect the slime, and heat the pitch, and get the little clothes ready; and then she would go with her mother and choose the place where he should be put; and when her mother said to her, “Now, you stop there in the flags and watch him,” how gladly she accepted the charge!—“I will see to him, mother—never fear: you go home, and I will let you know directly anything happens.” And yet it was anything but a pleasant charge!—Mosquitoes, flies, frogs, and snakes, all of which abound on the banks of the river, are not agreeable companions—children especially, would rather have their room than their company. And then we must not forget that the Nile is full of crocodiles. When everything is quiet they come crawling up out of the water to bask in the sun—huge fellows, ten or fifteen feet long, looking very much like logs of timber with the bark on. Now they lash the mud with their tails—now they grunt and chop their jaws—now they open their mouths and gape, and you see dark red caverns, and rows of teeth which make you shudder. They would swallow you as you would swallow a pill! Miriam knew these monsters were lying

around her; she knew that they had often seized children as big as herself, and eaten them up; but love is an emboldening thing, and she loved her little brother. "Poor babe!" she would say, "if I am in danger, what danger you are in! if I do not feel comfortable to be left alone, how could I leave you alone!" "So she stood afar off to wit what would be done with him."

Dear children, how much may those of you who are older do, if you really love your younger brothers and sisters. Parents rightly look to you to be an example to them, and to get on fast with your own studies that you may teach them. You should try to amuse them, even if it takes you off from your own pleasures; you should be ready to assist in dressing them. When they are sick, you should offer to take your seat by their bed-side: and when they are intrusted to your care you should see that they do not go near the fire, or the pond, or the cattle. Many an elder sister has had to "walk softly" all her days because she neglected to do this, and so added another tiny mound to the long row in the churchyard! On the other hand, many an elder sister stands only next to father and mother in the grateful recollections of the younger children; they owe half their education, and half their piety to her.

Miriam had not waited long before her anxieties were relieved; God kept back the alligators, and sent the Princess-Royal to the spot! She saw her come walking along, she saw her stop just by the little ark, (how her heart must have fluttered then!) she saw the maid go and fetch it, she saw them open it, and bend over it: That was enough: She glided forth from her hiding-place, and stood by them. It required courage to address this noble personage, and it required self-restraint to conceal her own interest in the baby-boy;—and she shewed both. Respectfully, and yet as if it was no concern of hers, she asked if her Highness would like her to go and call a nurse who would bring that little foundling up: for "I know of a very good one," she said: And when she got the order—"Go," "she went and got the babe's mother!" How cleverly it was done! Her mother may have said, "Manage it so if you can;" but I rather think it was her own bright thought: She asked God to direct her, and drew the bow at a venture;—"How delightful it would be if I could get him back to his mother, and that by order of the Princess herself! but I must take care that neither she nor any one finds out

that it is my brother, for if they know it, he will be killed, because we disobeyed the decree and kept him alive:—I must be very cautious, but I will try.” And she did it! She had the joy of seeing the child placed by the Princess’ command in his mother’s arms, and hearing her say to her, “Good woman, take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.”

And Miriam had her wages for her love to her little brother—God paid her!—She lived to behold that little brother the Lord’s ambassador to the proud Pharaoh, the worker of the wonderful plagues which brought Pharaoh on his knees before him, the deliverer of his nation, their lawgiver, their leader through the wilderness, and the writer of the first five books in the Bible! whilst she herself, by means of her relationship to him, became the Head of the women of Israel: She it was who took a timbrel in her hand, and led them all in the dance and song on that glad morning when the Red Sea engulfed both the horse and his rider: “Sing ye to the Lord;”—she cried to them, “sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously!”

Notice, he had a very kind Benefactress. She was none other than Pharaoh’s daughter—the daughter of that very king who had issued the decree for his murder! How wonderful are God’s ways!—We should have proposed that some Egyptian washerwoman who had no child of her own, should come by and find the little outcast, and take him home without saying anything to anybody, and bring him up for herself:—This would have saved his life, and we should have heard no more and cared no more about him. But God had great things in store for that babe. He was to be a “king in Jeshurun,” he was to bring the whole nation out of slavery, and give laws to the world! This made it necessary that he should be highly connected, and skilled in all the learning of the age. So God directed, not an Egyptian washerwoman, but the noblest lady in the land to the spot! She “thought not so, indeed”—she came, as she was wont, to bathe in the cool of the day; and her maidens walked along by the river side. Presently, she caught sight of something which she had never seen there before—it was a little ark of bulrushes lying in the flags; the gnats were dancing over it, and the rays of the setting sun made it shine like gold. But what could be in it? “Bring it to me”—she said to one of her maids, “and

let me look at it." The maid went down amongst the reeds, and took it up. It was very heavy—evidently there was something strange inside, but how could she guess what it was? And now she laid it at her royal mistress' feet, "and when she had opened it, she saw the child!"—there was a noble baby-boy! Up to this time he had been asleep; but the sound of their voices awoke him, and he "wept!"

But, dear children, what a critical moment that was for the little one! Had the princess been like her father, she would have said, "O! it is only a miserable infant, take it away!" or she might have bidden them fling it far out into the river, as if it were a kitten; but she was not like her father: That innocent face, and that plaintive cry melted her heart: "she had compassion on him"—sweet words!—"she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children;" and she at once determined to adopt him as her son. She accepted Miriam's offer to fetch her a nurse; she gave him into her care, promising to pay her her wages—(as if Jochebed would want wages for nursing her own darling child!)—and when he was grown, she took him into her palace, and he became her son, and she called his name Moses, which means "drawn out," "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water:"—She could not have chosen a better name,—whenever it was mentioned, it would remind her of that memorable walk by the river-side!

Now, dear children, what an interesting history we have had here written by Moses himself—so we may be sure it is quite true; and the one great lesson which it teaches us is, "That nothing is too hard for the Lord."

Here was an infant, who, as far as we could see, would have been thrown into the river directly it was born; but God put it into its mother's heart to save it. At the end of three months she is compelled to put it in a little ark in the Nile. Now, surely, it will be devoured by the crocodiles, or carried out to sea by the current! No. That very day, God caused the king's daughter to come down to bathe, and she finds it and rescues it! Its mother's prayers are answered, and she has the joy of nursing it so long as it needed it! And the little "drawn-out" one becomes Israel's glory, the man whom prophets and apostles delighted to honour, and at whose

feet even we Gentiles sit and learn! Do we not rightly sing,—

“ God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm!

“ Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works his sov'reign will.”—

—at last, “ He makes them plain,” and then we all stand and admire! Oh! why cannot we trust Him more? Why cannot we believe that He will do for us what He did for Moses?—that He will restrain the wrath of Satan, our great enemy; and fulfil the petitions of our parents; and make us His own dear sons and daughters now, and “ kings and priests unto God and our Father ” hereafter! He has promised to do it,—He has done it for thousands of children—He will do it for us, blessed be God!

JESUS AND THE HAPPY FAMILY AT BETHANY.

I AM now going to tell you about a very happy family who lived at Bethany, a little village a short distance from Jerusalem. Why were they so happy, do you think? Perhaps you say they were very rich. No, dear children, *that* would not have made them so happy. One little verse tells us how it was. “ Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus; ” and he often stayed at their house when he was near Jerusalem. Those *must* be happy whom Jesus loves. The first time we read anything about Martha and Mary was when Jesus was travelling and they received him into their house. As soon as Jesus had sat down he began to speak to them of the things of God. Mary was eager to catch every word which fell from the Saviour's lips. She sat at his feet, and heard his words. Now Martha was really a good woman too, and no doubt loved Jesus; but she did not show her love in the best way. She was so anxious to provide a good meal for her Lord that she had her mind

too much occupied with making it ready. At last she became quite vexed that her sister did not help her. She came and begged that Jesus would send her to assist. Hear how Jesus answered her. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but only one thing is needful."

Ah, dear children, you know that is the care of the soul. It is not wrong to attend to the business of life. No; God has told us that we must not be "slothful in business;" but we must still be "fervent" or earnest "in spirit, serving the Lord." Jesus himself tells us not to seek what we must eat, or what we must drink; but to "seek *first* the Kingdom of God and his righteousness." This was just what Mary had done; and no doubt she had learnt such sweet lessons from her Saviour's lips as she could never forget.

A short time after this Martha and Mary were in great trouble. Their dear brother Lazarus became very ill. Jesus was a long way off, beyond Jordan; but they sent directly to tell him. I am sure you think that Jesus would go at once and heal him, and I dare say they expected it too. No; Jesus could show his Almighty power more wonderfully by waiting a time. After he knew, therefore, that Lazarus was sick, he remained two days longer in the same place where he was. During this time Lazarus died. Do you not think that his sisters must have wondered that Jesus had not come to them in their trouble? At last Jesus set out towards Bethany. As he was journeying he told his disciples plainly that Lazarus was dead. When they reached Bethany they found that he had been buried four days. Many of the Jews came from Jerusalem to comfort Martha and Mary. Some of them took the first news to the poor sisters that Jesus was coming. As soon as Martha heard this she ran to meet him, but Mary sat still in the house. When Martha met the Saviour she cried, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died; but even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, he will give it to thee." Jesus said, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha thought Jesus meant that he should rise again at the last day. Then it was that the Saviour spoke those wonderful and blessed words which are now used in our Burial Service every time a body is committed to the grave:—"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Jesus asked Martha if she believed this? She answered, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

And now Martha became quite uneasy at Mary's absence. She sent to call her secretly; and then Mary arose, and came to meet Jesus.

He had not yet gone into the town, but was still in the same place where Martha had met him. Many Jews followed Mary, thinking she was going to the grave to weep there. When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews that were with her weeping, his tender spirit was much troubled, and "Jesus wept"! The Jews talked together as they went along, and some said, "Could not this man have prevented his dying? He opened the eyes of the blind; surely he might have saved Lazarus."

At last they came to the grave. It was a cave, and a large stone was laid on it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone?" Martha told him that, as the body had been four days in the grave, it must be already in a state of decay. Jesus only answered her by repeating that, if she would believe, she should see the glory of God. The stone was taken away. Jesus prayed for a moment, and he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." Immediately he that was dead came forth, bound round with grave clothes, and his face covered with a napkin. Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go."

Do you know children, that a day is coming, when all who are in their graves shall hear the Saviour's voice, and shall come forth? Oh! what an awful call will that be to those who have died in their sins; but oh! how blessed to those who have loved the Saviour here on earth! How joyfully will they rise to meet him when they hear his voice! They will not come out of their graves in the same poor, vile bodies, which they had before they died. They will have turned to dust; and instead of them, Jesus will give them glorious bodies like his own, and they shall be with him for ever.

Dear children, pray that you may learn to love Jesus now, and then it will not signify whether you are alive when he comes again, or whether your poor bodies have lain in the grave for a few years. When he does come, those who have died in the faith and love of Jesus shall rise *first*; then his own people who are alive on the earth shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

DISSUASIVES FROM UNCHARITABLENESS.

By the Rev. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”—1 PETER iv. 8.

As sometimes the colours in which pictures were painted fade out, and give to later days but a pale image of that which once glowed, so is it in language. Words have their meanings fade out of them. While some gain in scope, and are intrusted with the burden of larger meanings, through the changes of time,—others, like aqueducts, neglected and choked up, carry but a small part of the original stream which once coursed through them. This is the case with the word *charity*. It was once large enough to signify the whole of the great disposition of Christian love. Now it is cramped to signify, in the main, some of the effects of that disposition.

In the passage selected the whole feeling is represented in the first clause, and a particular application of it, or effect of its use, in the second. Inclining to this view, I purpose to inculcate the duty of kindness and charitableness of feeling, and judgment, and word, toward our fellow-men. It is no part of my intention to obscure your sight, or to confound the sharp lines drawn between good and evil; nor yet to confuse your moral sense, so that the lenient judgment of evil-doers shall be founded on indifference toward evil. Hatred of evil is entirely consistent with charitableness toward erring men. But observation will teach us that we are less apt to condemn wickedness severely than weakness. Men will crucify you for a foible, but forgive a fault. They will excuse a sin, but condemn a weakness. In a path in which we travel, we naturally turn out for a rock or a fallen tree with patience and good humour, while we fret at the light dust that fills the air. And so in life, the more serious errors are likely to be treated with leniency, and the petty and nettlesome faults with all uncharitableness.

There is no book that dissects so boldly as the Bible; that exposes every nerve and fibre of wickedness with such fidelity; that in-

veighs so pointedly, or denounces so fearfully. And yet no book is more intent upon inculcating leniency of feeling toward offenders. It is, then, plainly possible to abhor evil, and yet maintain charity. A sober estimate of evil is not inconsistent with pity for it. Christ wept over that very Jerusalem which he had consigned to destruction. Many a father sternly thrusts out a worthless son, disowned, and enters his house again a heart-broken man. While the Bible is full of terrible denunciations, it is just as full of exquisite entreaties, both directed to the same culprit. Thus God, whose anger burns to the lowest hell against sin, expatriated himself to die for sinners. Indignation and pity, then, are often contemporaneous duties.

What saith the Scripture? "Charity is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." Let us examine a little what else is enjoined upon us.

There are some who are habitually suspicious of evil. An evil deed never escapes them; and a good deed rarely fails to be fathered on a bad motive, by their misjudging. Some men seem to be naturally suspicious. Some are made cynical by a direct experience which has sharpened the eye to discern the nicest shades of evil, without softening the heart to pity them. Such men are seldom charitable. Men always seem to do wrong, to them, and never with any material palliations.

There are others who are ruled by a perpetual summer of good-nature. It shines in their face; it softens every tone; it rules every look, and gesture, and action. They seem almost incapable of dislike. Nobody does wrong—at least they did not *mean* to do it; or if they did, it is not without such excuse that, on the whole, they can forgive them. They are disposed to forgive everybody for everything.

This second extreme is certainly the more amiable of the two; but it forms a very imperfect character, notwithstanding. For an indiscriminate charitableness of disposition puts all offences on the same level. The same leniency is bestowed upon a crime as upon a misfortune, and thus a quality very excellent in the possessor, has the practical effect of confounding the distinctions between good and evil. However brightly such a disposition may glow

upon the page of poetry, it invariably makes weak parents, foolish statesmen, maudlin magistrates, and unjust judges.

But the greatest number fall into a class lying between these extremes. Most men rely upon their impulses for their judgments. They are disposed to judge with charity all whom they love, and with severity all whom they hate. Kindred, party, friends, the abettors of their interests, the adjuvants of their pleasures, receive a full measure of lenient forbearance. Others are left to the mercy of their anger and fretfulness. In general, men are charitable simply because they feel good-natured, but uncharitable when peevish ; and in either case without regard to the merit of the question. Nay, the same object will receive our maledictions at one moment, and our pity at the next. If such latitude of judgment were allowed to our courts, what would become of justice ? Who could endure a tribunal whose judge condemned everybody when vexed, and acquitted everybody when pleased ? We quickly discern the evil in a judge. But is not every man in some sense a judge ? Are they bound to declare according to the truth in court ? And are not we, in the perpetual adjudication of character and deeds, bound to declare according to the truth out of court ? Nothing ought to be more precious in our eyes than character. If it is to be adjudged, it should be done with an effort, at least, at truth. But usually the decision is what the impulse is ; good-natured or ill-natured, mild or harsh, just or wrongful. And thus we sport with the feelings and the good names of our fellow-men, as if they were the merest trifles.

The rule of the Bible is manifestly the only true and just rule : "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgments." Every man should form his judgment according to the truth. This rule at once cuts off hasty judgments, and censorious and spiteful decisions ; and it forbids prejudice and passion. It obliges every man who passes sentence upon another, even by his thought, to know what he judges before he decides.

There is a peculiar cruelty in the unjust judgment of our thoughts. It may be worse if we utter them, or employ them in deeds ; but even if they live only in the bosom, and are unjust, there is a cruelty of wickedness in them which every high-minded man should be susceptible to.

The demands of justice require that we should, by word or deed, injure no man's reputation, and disturb no man's happiness. But there is a judgment-hall in every man's soul. There is a silent and secret court of the thoughts into which men are dragged, tried, and convicted, and put, in reputation, to suffering, without a chance of pleading or making any extenuation. And, because no man can defend himself, and is at the mercy of our moods and feelings, every honourable nature should feel bound to the highest equity and delicacy of honour, in framing thoughts and judgments of men.

In that star-chamber of the soul, what wantonness of cruelty has been recorded! There are histories of visits to tyrants' dungeons, and priestly inquisitions, low rows of cells, chains with ghostly skeletons, pits full of victims' bones; and as the curious traveller follows the dim and flickering torch that wakes up upon the gloomy walls a faint and tremulous glow, and seems chased down by quick-following shadows, he almost sees the unhappy spirits of those done to cruel death, and hears their hoarse whispers, sighing for vengeance, or imploring pity. But how many men carry such a chamber of injustice and of mischief in their own bosom, unexplored and unsearched! Men are stabbed with malignant thoughts, their lives misjudged, their characters impugned, their motives harshly construed. Uncharitable thoughts, like muffled inquisitors, steal after them, with hatred in the eye, and murder in the heart.

There, if anywhere, should we erect a tribunal, white in purity and immaculate in justice; and, as there can be no justice where there is no love, so we should be filled with kindness, and every sentence and judgment, even of our thoughts toward our fellow-men, should be tempered with mercy.

Consecration is not wrapping one's self in a holy web in the sanctuary, and then coming forth after prayer and twilight meditation, and saying, "There, I am consecrated." Consecration is going out into the world where God Almighty is, and using every power for his glory. It is taking all advantages as trust funds—as confidential debts owed to God. It is simply dedicating one's life, in its whole flow, to God's service.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 18TH, 1860,
BY THE REV. W. W. CHAMPNEYS, M.A.,

(*Canon Residentary*),

AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL'S, LONDON.

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—JOHN iv. 13, 14.

IN the history of which these words are a part, we have the Son of God in his yearning love, seeking and saving a single sinful woman. Let us look at the narrative. Jesus, with his company, was on his way through Samaria to Galilee. They had reached the city of Sychar in Samaria, better known as Sichem—the word meaning, "sweet wine," in derision of all drunkards of Ephriam. The Saviour was wearied with his journey, and while his disciples went into the city to buy meat, he sat down; as he was by the well, a Samaritan woman came forth to draw water. The Saviour yearned over this woman. He might have pleaded weariness and exhaustion as an excuse for not seeking her, for not speaking, but it was his "meat and drink" to do the will of God. Here was a lost soul, and he was come "to seek and to save that which was lost." Seeking to draw her into conversation, when she had let down her pitcher with the rope which she had brought with her into the deep well, Jesus asked her to give him to drink. The woman was surprised at the question. She saw by his dress that he was a Jew, and the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritana. She expressed her surprise: "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" Jesus answered and said

Mother's Magazine.—April, 1860.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

unto her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Living water! The woman did not understand what he meant. She looked at him. He had no pitcher to let into the well, nor rope with which to let it down; she could not understand whence he could get this living or spring water, which the Jews poetically called "living water," because, as it comes from the well bubbling and spouting up, it seems as if it were alive. The woman said to him, "Sir"—for, mark, poor as Jesus was, there was something about him that ever commanded respect. We mark it in the conduct of his disciples towards him; we mark it in the behaviour of those who had intercourse with him. We know, for we have seen it, how the face of the poorest countryman, who has been in practice and habit little removed from the animals, and whose expression of countenance was a faithful expression of his low habits and his degraded nature—we have seen that man, when the grace of God has come into his heart, become so entirely changed in countenance, that his very friends would not have known him; just as some rough, rude, rocky landscape, which was all gloom and darkness when the clouds overshadowed it, has glittered and glowed in the brilliancy of the sunshine. What, then, must have been the expression of his face, in whom not only perfect love was dwelling, but the infinite love of God, that came to seek and to save the lost! Poor as he was, therefore, we find her addressing him with words of respect. "Sir," she said, "thou hast nothing to draw with; thou hast neither pitcher nor rope, and the well is deep; from whence, then, has thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?" "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman did not still understand the word, excepting that she had roused in her mind a desire for that which he called the living water. So she said, "Give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw," clearly misunderstanding the object of our Saviour's words. Her conscience must be touched. No sinner ever yet came to the Saviour till he knew that he wanted him. The sense of need must draw us to him. The man must feel himself ill, to go to the physician. And this woman's conscience was, because of habitual sin, in a dead and torpid state. It must be roused. Jesus said unto her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." "The woman answered and said, I have no husband." True and untrue; but she stood before one who knew her history, who searched her heart, before whom no secrets are hid, and before whom every transaction of her life, to the very merest thought, was mapped out. Jesus said gently—but how the words

THE WATER OF LIFE.

must have searched her!—"Thou hast well said, I have no husband, for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thine husband. In that saidst thou truly." Her character came out in these words. She had probably—it may have been through temper, it may have been through unfaithfulness—caused her husband to divorce her; or she might, from waywardness and wilfulness, divorced them; and now she was living in sin. Whether it were known to those around her or not, it was known to Jesus. She was living in sin with one that was not her husband. She perceived that this was a prophet; and willing, as all men are, to shake off that which touches their conscience, and to gain information upon lesser things, she put before him the great question on which their nation was at issue with the Jews, as to whether, in the mountains which he saw near, or in Jerusalem, it was right to worship God. The Saviour plainly told her that the hour was coming when all local worship of God should be put an end to—when neither in Jerusalem, the only place then for sacrifice, nor in that mountain, they should worship the Father. The day was coming when men should better understand the character and the nature of that God whom they worshipped. They should know that he is a Spirit, and that it is only in spirit that we can worship him; that words without the heart are mere empty sounds; that prayers, when they proceed not from the soul and from the desire of the heart, are worthless in God's sight; and that it is when the spirit that is in man is going out in sorrow for sin—in earnest desires after holiness, in trust in God's mercy, and in joyfulness for his love—that then the principal Spirit, the all-pervading Spirit, whom no man hath seen, or can see, is gratified with the worship of his creature, and that only is worship in his sight. "I know," said the woman, "that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things." What must have been her surprise and joy, when this lowly man—who had shown that he knew her heart through and through, who had shown that he understood her character, who had dealt with her with such tenderness, though he had proved how much he knew she deserved severity—said to her, "I that speak unto thee am he." She immediately left her water-pot on the well's brink; she made all haste to the city of Sychar; she told every man she met that she had found a man who had told her everything she ever did, for she fully believed that he who had told her what he had told her, could have told her all her life, had it pleased him; and they flocked out to Jesus; and two days they were privileged with his company, with his intercourse, with his conversation and instruction; and the result of those two blessed days to many of that city—who are now, we believe, with the woman rejoicing in the Saviour's presence among the spirits of the just made perfect—was that they said to the woman, "Now we believe not because of thy word, but we have heard him ourselves; and are persuaded that this is the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Such is the history.

And now, who is this that met the woman at this well? He was a man weary with a long journey in the heat of the Syrian sun, a poor man who took all his journeys on

THE WATER OF LIFE.

foot, who never rode, we believe, but once just before his death; a man faint and hungry; a man whose heart was so tender that he could not restrain his sympathy even when he was about to show his power to be above man's by raising the widow's son; a man, for he was grieved as we are, angry as we are, though never angry at anything but sin. He loved as we loved. As a child he was subject to his parents; as he grew it was in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man; a man in whom the most perfect scrutiny never yet found the slightest flaw or blemish. His disciples, who saw him at all times in the unguarded moments of private intercourse, when character, if simply public character, is put off, and passes not into the privacy of the home; whose disciples, and especially one whom he had so often rebuked, and who, therefore, true to human nature, must have been on the look-out to see if he could find any flaw in the man who rebuked him, has recorded that he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; a man whom the severest jealousy of his enemies, searching for inequalities and accomplishing a diligent search, never yet found one single blot or stain of sin, one single act or word, or even tone or look, of inconsistency; a man of whom the heart-searching God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But he is more than man; he is the word of God, the same that was in the beginning with God, the Creator by whom all things were made, the brightness of the Father's glory, the visible ray from him who is the invisible fountain of all light, the express image of his marvellous person, whom no man hath seen or can see, a man who was able to say truly, "I and the Father are one. Before Abraham was, I am." This is the man who met the woman at the well—"Emanuel, God with us," the gift of God, "for God so loved the world that he GAVE his only begotten Son;" so loved the world as to give him in whom he is so well pleased to become man, to take into union with his own Godhead the nature that sinned, to knit man to God in his own wondrous person, never to be divided, and in himself to overcome all evil that he may make man conqueror over all evil, whom God gave into this world to live for us, to do such works of mercy and love as he did, to bear our sins in his own body, to be made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is the being that met the woman at the well of Samaria, Emanuel, God with us. He tells her, in the words of my text, that "whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I," says he, "shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Brethren, which of us does not know, if we only watch our own hearts, that not only water, but that nothing else that is human, is able to satisfy the thirst of the immortal spirit? Which of us does not know that, however grateful we may be and ought to be for all those countless blessings with which God, the God of mercy, our beneficent Creator, had strewn our path, that still none of those blessings satisfy and fill the immortal spirit? Which of us does not feel, if we look into our own hearts, that sweet as are all the domestic ties that bind us to our kind, sweet as the love of child to parent, and parent to child, sweet as the bond that binds the loving brother to the tender sister, yet all these do not satisfy and

THE WATER OF LIFE.

fill the immortal spirit? Which of us, if we have been exercised in this way, does not know that pursuits of intellect, the acquirements of knowledge with all their stores, even if some of us have grasped them richly and largely, do not satisfy or fill the immortal spirit, and all that this world can give is still like the water of which the Saviour spoke—"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again?" And if these purer things, these which God has given us, these which are only wrong in excess, which are right and blessed in the right using—if these cannot satisfy, how much less can the immortal spirit be satisfied with any draughts that are brought from the foul wells of carnal and sinful pleasure, where the waters, naturally foul, have been trampled into deeper foulness by the tread of every passing passion! Our Saviour, who knows what is in man, for he made man, who understands the wants of the spirit which he has created, told the woman, and tells us, that there is a water which he can give to us of which those that drink shall never thirst in the same way again; but that the water which he shall give us shall be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

I need not even tell you, for you know it, that under the figure of water the Saviour speaks of the Blessed Spirit, and I would ask you to remark that when he says that he can give that Spirit, and that he will give it, to all that ask it, he gives to those who will weigh it the strongest possible proof of his own Godhead, that he has power to send the Holy Ghost into the hearts of all that come to him in faithful prayer. That blessed Spirit is the living water, the water of life, living, for it has life in itself, living, because it imparts life to all that receive it. Like those waters which issued from the sanctuary which Ezekiel saw, wherever they flowed there they created life. This Spirit is the promise of the text, the Spirit to cleanse away sin, the Spirit that is able to take away guilt from the conscience, the Spirit that removes all clouds from the mind and all evil from the heart, the Spirit which, when once given and once received, satisfies the thirst of the soul and makes that Spirit that has it never feel again the same void, the same sense of emptiness and want which it had before. It is in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The man that has it has his rejoicing in himself and not in another. "The heart knows its own bitterness," and the stranger does not intermeddle with that divine and heavenly joy. It is a well of water bubbling up with joy within the soul; it is the Spirit of God witnessing with our spirit that we are the children of God, by working in us those filial affections, those desires to please and to trust in him, that growing love to him, that earnest desire after perfect obedience to his commandments, which, by proving that we have the disposition of sons, prove to us that we are also incontestibly sons. The Spirit which makes the Christian rejoice in the testimony of his conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity he has his conversation in the world—a spirit that influence can touch and reach, for it is within the man—it is a well. If our heart is as it is, a fortress assailed and attacked by evil from without, here within the Christian's heart is that well of springing water which makes him independent of all outward resources, and he fears not that this spring shall ever be cut off. It is a well that is never dried in the heats of prosperity, for in the time of our wealth it keeps us humble. It is a spring that is never frozen in the cold frosts of adversity, for it retains its temperature in equal consistency whether in prosperity or adversity. It is a well that never can be drawn dry, though whenever the bucket of prayer is let

THE WATER OF LIFE.

down into it there flow up from below gushes of that heavenly grace which fill the heart with joy and gladness, and which enable the Christian to fulfil daily duties, strengthen him to meet his trials, making him gratefully to use his mercies, making him in health active for his God, making him in sickness patient under his load, which will make him go on, cheering him even as he passes through the valley of death, which, because it rises by the throne of God, because it proceeds from the river of life which is by the throne of God, springs up into everlasting life, and does not end its joyful course until the Christian who has received the first fruits of the Spirit has received the fulness of that grace which shall transform him—body, and soul, and spirit, into the perfect likeness of the glorious Lord to whose grace he owes it that he has ever heard the invitation to come, to whose protecting power he owes it that he has ever been drawn to him; to whose gracious love he owes it that when he has been drawn he has received it when he came, and so has been able to testify to the truth of these words that while whosoever drinks of the water, the mere water of the human well, whether naturally or morally, that man shall thirst again, and he knows that it was so. He is able to testify also that whosoever drinks of the water that Christ shall give him shall never thirst in that sense, and never feel that sense of want again! but the water that God shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life, rising to the level of the eternal fount from whence it sprang.

Suffer me to ask, my brethren, have you accepted this invitation? Suffer me, in all humility but in all affection and in all earnestness, as a dying man speaking to dying men, on a subject on which our eternal life depends, to ask you whether you know who this is that spoke to the woman, whether you know him by blessed experience, whether you know him by the revelation of his word, by the conclusions of his book, by the testimony of his Spirit, whether you believe that he who filled the whole of Palestine with such works of marvel and of mercy is, in deed and in truth, the Eternal Son of God, as he was the blessed Son of Man.

Have you been led, truly and in your heart of hearts, to believe that he at whose touch sickness fled and the body changed to health, at whose words the ear received the sounds that it had never heard before; at whose touch the string of the dumb man's tongue snapped and loosed; at whose command the dark eye was opened and the sweet light of day poured in upon the once darkened brain; at whose word leprosy fled from the blood and the bones of the half-eaten leper, and, in the place of the witness of coming death, there flushed in his face the flush of coming health and life; at whose touch, as he took the hand of the dead, and at whose word of power the spirit that had fled far beyond the earth, the sun, the stars, to the place of the departed spirits, came quick as thought into the body, and he that was dead stood up, the silent heart began to beat, the pulse of life to flow, the lungs to work, and words of thankfulness to break from the lips that had been cold in death—whether he whose word stilled the tempest, made the wild waves quiet and the blustering winds silent—whether he is, in deed and in truth, the Son of God? Do you believe this, beloved brethren, in your heart of hearts? Have you been led by the teaching of God's grace to look to the Cross, to study sin there, to see what it deserves, to see what it must have if it is not put away, to see how the justice of God cannot pass it by, how the truth of God is pledged to destroy it from under heaven, to see how the love and mercy of God laid it on his dear Son, his well-beloved, that he might take it away, take its curse from

THE WATER OF LIFE.

you, and might fit you for the blessing? Have you been led to believe in your heart of hearts that he who did no sin, who knew it not in thought or word, yet was made sin, had sin as completely made his own as if he had committed the sin of the world and paid the debt, that we who know no righteousness might be made the righteousness of God in him? Do you believe that he who once sat, in his weariness, his faintness, his hunger, yet in his yearning love, by the side of this Jacob's well, is now at the right hand of God exalted, angels, principalities, and powers being subject to him, and that as he had power then he has power now? All power to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask. Have you—suffer me to ask the question—have you, from a deep sense of the unsatisfying character of all human things, been led to seek for that which he calls the living water which alone can satisfy the wants and quench the thirst of the immortal spirit! Surely, dear brethren, it is not a hard condition; it is not hard to ask. What words can be fuller of tenderness and loving invitation than those words of this most blessed One—"If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that saith, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

Have you thus come to him in earnest prayer to ask him for his Holy Spirit to pray to him that he will seal it for eternal life? Have you earnestly sought that blessed gift which alone can cleanse the conscience from the sense of guilt—which alone can wash away the sins of the past—which alone can make our hearts pure day by day? Have you sought that precious gift by whose power alone we can serve God in our daily, commonest duties, that they shall be duties well-pleasing to God by Jesus Christ? Have you asked him to give you the gift which, when you have, you will find that peace which passeth understanding—you will know a rest from all the excitement, and weariness, and unsatisfying changeableness of the things of life—for the effect of righteousness is peace, and the fruit of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever? Have you asked of him, who alone can reveal Christ in you as well as to you—who alone can make you look to God as your Father and your Friend—who alone can enable you to live in the sunshine of his favour, in the sweet sense of reconciliation with him—who alone can carry us safely through all the temptations to which we are daily exposed, and strengthen us for all the trials, and the sorrows, and the losses of life—carrying us calmly, trustingly, peacefully, humbly along this slippery road on which we are all passing; and when the last final struggle comes—when we have to pass from this life into his presence, who searches us through and through, and before whom our whole life, with all its thoughts of evil, and all its purposes, and all its motives, and all its imperfect principles, and all its hasty words, and all its proud fancies, and all that is wrong in it, is mapped out and laid open—who can give you grace to meet that God in Christ Jesus, not as the enemy, not as one who is pledged to punish your sin in you, but by his faithfulness and by the blood of his covenant has bound himself to forgive you all trespasses—to present you faultless with the Redeemer's righteousness before the throne of God with exceeding joy? Oh, my beloved brethren! is it right to ask if the debtor should have his debt paid for the asking, where would be the debtor? If the sick man could have sickness removed merely for the asking, who would be sick? We are debtors; our debts are ten thousand talents more than the stars—more than the sand; but they are paid by him who asks us to come and seek his grace, and he will give us the full discharge of all if we but come. We are sick—sick unto death, unless he cures us; but he

THE WATER OF LIFE.

can cure—he will cure—if we come to him, and submit ourselves to his holy teaching, and are led by his Holy Spirit. He will bring us into a state of comparative health here upon earth, and will place us in that which is as it were his great hospital, the Church, where all are sick, but where all have the prospect of certain health in the distance; and when the cure is all but perfected, he will send us up to return our everlasting thanksgivings to him who has loved us, and sought us, and drawn us to himself, who will then present us, through the power of his transforming grace, complete in his likeness before the throne of God. Oh, may he impress these words of simple invitation upon all our hearts, and draw us to ask, and to ask on, of his grace till we have found it, and when we have found it to use it continually, and ask it on for his glory, that we may live here in his faith and fear, in loving penitence, holy obedience, active duty, until we exchange the worship of the Church below, the prayers, the confessions, for the worship of that Church above, where there is no prayer, because there is no want, but where everlasting praises will ascend to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Sketches and Essays.

THE MOTHER.

THE instruction conveyed by the history of Abraham and his family is chiefly addressed to fathers, as his own character stands so prominently forward in all the transactions of his life, of faith and obedience. Yet it cannot be doubted that he was much indebted to Sarah as mother of his son, and mistress of his family, for the success that attended his training and discipline of those under his control.

The maternal character is one very much illustrated in the pages of Holy Scripture; and though we know not much of Sarah in this respect, yet there are many of her daughters on whom the mantle of their father Abraham seems to have fallen, and whose piety, diligence, and success, in the training of their little ones, are well worthy of our consideration and imitation.

It is a remarkable fact, that, whereas several of the holy men of God, whose history is given for our instruction, failed very signally in the education of their children, most of the holy women whose lives are recorded, wholly or partially, are such as are worthy of imitation in the fulfilment of this relationship. The fact is, that to be a good wife and mother is the great earthly business of woman, and if she fails here she fails totally. Whereas man's domestic duties often come in by the way only, and he may be great and good, as a King, a Statesman, a Soldier, a Prophet, a Priest, and in various other characters, while his attention may be very little directed to, and his time very little occupied by, the care of his children.

We have before alluded to the character of Isaac in its connexion with his mother, and to the respect and affection he ever bore to her memory.

The history of Hagar and Ishmael seems at first sight to be merely a foil to these domestic virtues: yet we must not wholly pass by even Hagar, in our glance at the characters of the mothers of Scripture. If Hagar cannot teach us much else, we may learn from

The Mother's Magazine. May, 1860.

E

her that our unsubdued sins and failures will probably be copied by our children, and that our froward and unlovely tempers will probably descend to them for an heritage.

In the unamiable family-picture presented to us in Gen. xvi., we behold Hagar, elated by her unexpected elevation of circumstances, and by the prospect of introducing the so long coveted heir into Abraham's family, treating her mistress with contempt. It is probable that she possessed a haughty unsubdued temper, though it is by no means improbable that she was a believer in the God of Abraham, and perhaps a partaker of his grace. For the dealings of the Lord towards her are full of grace and condescension, the Angel of the Lord twice appearing to her, and that for the enunciation of blessing, as well as for the direction of present conduct. And she, recognising the divine message, and obedient to the divine command, returns to her mistress, and is fain to dwell with her in the place of subjection for many years.

Yet, doubtless, in all those years the proud spirit was not subdued, the scornful tongue had not learned to speak with humility and meekness.

It is probable that during the long interval that elapsed between the birth of Ishmael and that of Isaac, Hagar secretly cherished the hope and expectation, that after all she would obtain the supremacy in the family, and that the death of either Sarah or Abraham would make her son undisputed heir of all his father's possessions.

Galling, indeed, therefore, to her feelings, must have been the announcement in the family, of the birth of the true heir, and we have little cause to doubt that she privately imparted her chagrin and disappointment to her son; perhaps little thinking that he would repeat what she said.

Parents are too apt to do this; they express freely, in the bosom of their families, revengeful, contemptuous, and slighting expressions, concerning their relations and neighbours, or even of their spiritual guides and instructors. The incautious hasty nature of childhood often causes these expressions to be repeated, when parents least wish it; and even if not, they remain in the young mind, poisoning and injuring its best feelings and affections.

If the children or servants in a house treat any of those who visit the heads of it with rudeness or contempt, there is, generally, reason

to conclude that they have been accustomed to hear slighting or rude remarks respecting them in their absence.

If therefore, we desire that our children should grow up courteous to all, respectful to their elders and superiors, kind and considerate to their inferiors, and reverential in manner and feeling towards the ministers of God's Word, it is by no means sufficient that we expect them to follow this course, but we must follow it undeviatingly ourselves.

The conversations which ordinarily take place between friends at the dinner or tea table, are often very prejudicial to the servants who are in attendance, and to the children who are silent listeners. The errors of good people, the defects in the last sermon, the supposed false doctrines of those who differ from them, are far too apt to become the table-talk of those who, just before in their closets, have been bewailing their own worthlessness and shortcomings, and praying for a blessing on all around them ; and who are ready at the close of their meal, to assemble with the people of God, to hear of the exceeding grace of Jesus in coming to blot out with his own most precious blood, the sins of the vilest.

But these things ought not so to be ; and they must not be so, if we desire that our children should grow up in the veneration and love of all that is venerable and lovely. Heedless as we know a lad of fifteen or sixteen often to be, it is not likely that Ishmael would have acted in this unbecoming manner towards Sarah and Isaac, if he had from his infancy heard nothing from his mother's lips concerning Sarah, but that which was dutiful, grateful and affectionate : if she had constantly impressed his mind with the fact that he was not the heir, but that he was to look forward with hope to the birth of one whom he was to acknowledge as his future superior, and who was the destined inheritor of all his father's possessions and all the promises of Jehovah.

Nor are these things trifles. Ishmael's whole life was changed by that one mocking speech ; his mother as well as himself was cast out from the abode of comfort and plenty, from the place where the worship of Jehovah was maintained, from the place of promise, of being sharers in the blessings belonging to him who was the centre of God's love, as then manifested on earth ; and cast out into a land of scorpions and dragons, where hunger and thirst, and

solitude, and burning heat without a shelter were their bitter portion.

Must not Hagar have felt this in those painful circumstances which the sacred historian so graphically delineates? "When the water was spent in the bottle, she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice and wept." (Gen. xxi. 15, 16.)

Perhaps she felt she had caused his death by her own conduct and evil example; and therefore instead of being able to soothe his dying agonies, she was constrained to turn her eyes away from them.

The temporal consequences of our ungoverned tongues may not be as grievous to our offspring as those entailed upon Hagar and hers; but we know not how far the Lord may account us guilty of their spiritual destruction and of their final exclusion from the family of the faithful, if we have been helpers of Satan in his efforts to prejudice their young minds against the truth, and against those who teach it.

THE BURNING AND THE SHINING LIGHT.

(JOHN V. 35.)*

BY THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON, D.D.

ON a cloudless evening, and about an hour after the sun has set, the stars begin to twinkle one by one, until ten or a dozen may be detected, and an hour or two later, when the whole glittering host is marshalled, the first ten or twelve are still pre-eminent, and these brightest stars we call first magnitudes. They are the foremost to arrest the upturned eye, and their fine effulgence will sometimes attract the gaze of the curious rustic, or fill young hearts with wonder. These first magnitudes are the landmarks of the firmament. We say that such a lesser star is near Sirius or Arcturus, or that it has the tint of the Lyre or Orion. And they are the sparks which first kindle scientific ardour: for were the face of the heavens sprinkled with starry dust, with evanescent and inconspicuous points of light, they would draw but little notice. It is the large and

* See No. 1,767 Penny Pulpit.

brilliant orb which blazes in the forehead of the evening sky, and which creates for a long way round it a loneliness of light, it is this which catches and detains our earthly vision, and kindles into devotion or intelligence some wondering spirit. And so, looking upon the firmament of Scripture, there are a few characters which outglory all the rest—some ten, twelve, or it may be twenty stars of the first magnitude—burning and shining lights which will not let the eye away, and which haunt the memory when the eye is closed—brilliant and conspicuous names, which serve as landmarks and points of reference, and which are also signals and surprises, arresting notice and awakening wonder,—signs and seasons which God has set in the world's historic sky : Enoch, Noah, Joab, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Samson, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Peter, John, Stephen, Paul—you have named nearly all the first magnitudes in the Bible's old and newer hemisphere. And though there be hundreds more of lesser lights, and though the lustre of these is again annihilated in the daylight which the sun of Righteousness makes, still these are the names which our fancy calls up in looking back on the Bible story—the main foci into which God has condensed the lessons which He would teach us through the persons of his fellow-men. Now we have a great deal of biography ; yes, a great deal of religious biography, besides that which the Bible contains ; but there is one respect in which the Bible specimens are absolutely unique. In all other cases man writes the tale of man—in these instances it is written by God. The Bible narratives are of all the clearest and most complete, for they are the only narratives written in the pure and penetrating light of the upper sanctuary. When Beza wrote the life of Calvin, he might tell all that intimate friendship could discover, or affectionate memory could treasure up ; and when Augustine wrote his own life, he might confess the worst which severe self-scrutinising could reveal, or a memory faithful to every misdeed could recall. But the utmost which either could record with any certainty was personal history—the self-prompted and independent doings of the isolated man. Neither the man who wrote his own biography, nor the man who wrote the biography of his friend, could tell precisely and infallibly how much of Divine Providence wrought in particular incidents, nor how much of Divine grace developed in particular

propensities and dispositions. They could tell what the man was, and what he did, but they could not tell so confidently how many of his doings and dispositions originated in God, and how many in himself, and how many in the devil. But this most profound and instructive narrative is what the Bible supplies. It shows us not only the workings of the heart, and the movements of the outward history, but it unveils those springs of action which were external to the individual altogether. It shows that hand sometimes fiendish and malign—oftener benign and omnipotent—which was constantly controlling the steps and moulding the character of a creature in whose destinies three worlds contended. And it is this which gives its interest to Bible biography. It is a record not of heroes but of saints. It tells not of valiant spirits, but of vessels of mercy—not of men whose own powerful will created him, but whom the more powerful will of God made mighty and illustrious. It tells not of shining lights who kindled their own fire, but it tells of starry apertures which Jehovah struck out in our moral firmament “to let His own glories through.” And in studying these Bible worthies—men thus raised up and directed by God—there are two aspects in which it is instructive to consider them. We may either look mainly to their history or mainly to their character, and in the one aspect we shall see them as manifestations of what God is, and in the other as *models* of what He would have us to be—stars of glory revealing God and stars of guidance directing us. If we turn to James v. 10, 11, you will find in one instance both combined. We often speak of the patience of Job, and the apostle speaks of it also; but he speaks of something besides. He not only records the patience of the patriarch, but the pitifulness of God. And in the same way we might instance lessons which the Lord has pointed out in the history of the patriarchs. Take for example Noah. His ark was builded, and the time was come that he should enter it. But there was something very formidable in that final and conclusive step. To look forward to these coming months, and think of all their chances, and all their perils; to know that for a year together he should be a waif upon the world of waters. And what if the flood should never ebb; and the earth never again should dry? And what if their dreary ship should wander age by age, and never touch another shore? And what if some calamity should occur

meanwhile, and dashed on some rugged coast, the frail and clumsy vessel should go down? And then there was something very damping in the power of powerlessness. To feel that he had no power over his floating home—to have no rudder by which to regulate its course; no scrap of canvas that he might stretch; no paddle that he might pull so as to speed it past the place of danger, or guide it into smother water; to have not even a loophole or a look-out, except a hole in the roof, which showed the dissolving sky. To be thus delivered in the dark, to be preserved by being made a prisoner, was a painful inversion of that independency and self-sufficiency which are natural to us all. And then to see the lofty mountains, which looked like ready-made retreats—to think how unlikely it was that these should be overwhelmed, and at all events to reason how much likelier and more lasting asylums they would prove than this precarious timber raft, and to see the vast majority counting on these as abundantly sufficient. To bid adieu to all these chances of preservation, and to venture life and every interest on the single chance of this one contrivance, looked a fearful and tremendous step. But the patriarch took it. He felt that this contrivance was as mighty as the Divine command, and he rejoiced to be the prisoner of a promise-keeping God. Fearless and unfaltering he stepped in, and when the clap of the closing door gave the sign to the waiting thunder, Noah felt that he was now the guest of God, and need fear no further ill. And when the drowning year was done, and from the opened door he and his whole family, and his dumb fellow passengers issued one by one, and none were missing, they saw how safe is the craziest craft which Omnipotence holds in the hollow of His hand, and how sure the port after the strangest voyage where Jehovah holds the helm. Which thing was written for our learning. There is one ark which all of us must enter, and there are two others which we ought. One ark is the Great Atonement. To embark our souls, with all their everlasting interests, in the finished work of Emmanuel—this is the step which many cannot take. They look up and see the lofty peaks. They see the sublime heights of piety to which some have reached. “Oh, if I were only as good as Paul or John. If I were only as devout as David Brainerd—as heavenly-minded as Henry Martyn.” And they try to clamber up to some holy or virtuous elevation—for they

think if they were only good enough—high enough in attainment and character—they would escape the wrath to come. Or if they can be persuaded to look at the provided means of safety, they would like the atonement far better if it allowed them something to do. But merely to enter into it, and thus be rescued by it—there seems something utterly inadequate and ignobly easy in this simple plan. To steer the ark—to row it—to thrust it along—to spread the sails, something active and positive they would desire; but merely to go in and stay in—to be not workers nor promoters, but merely inmates and passengers. Oh, there is self-denial and self-sacrifice here! Beloved readers, have you got the faith of Noah and Noah's family? Are you content to be neither the builders nor the navigators of the ark, but mere occupants? Oh, happy are you if thus reconciled to God's gracious and easy plan! and blessed will you be on that day when the ark opens on the Ararat of Eternity, and gives good account of all who have entered it! And again, it is like entering the ark when called to perform some arduous and self-sacrificing duty. Frequently in this ill-conditioned world obligation and personal interest are quite opposed—and sometimes, in commencing a course of well-doing, the disciple of Christ has to forsake houses and lands—to let go tempting bargains, or refuse ensnaring compacts, or even to resign a good appointment, and quit a lucrative calling. And in obeying the Divine command, and casting himself on the Providence of God, the believer is like the patriarch entering the dark unproved ark. He knows not what shall be the issue. There is no crevice by which he can discern the course along which he is drifting—no aperture to cheer him with the sight of emerging peaks, or nearer land—no window, except one overhead, to teach him that he must look up, and look no other way,—and many a time the winds are loud and the waters high. In such a storm he should not greatly wonder though the whole went down, and a few spars on the billows were all that told the tale. But, somehow or other, on the whole his heart keeps up, and he often says to himself: "What would I do if it were not for that window in the roof!"—till after long waiting and many a prayer, one day the door opens, and lets him out on a large and wealthy land, and he finds how good it is to be piloted blindfold to such a pleasant place.

But whatever you may think of this unreasoning abandonment of yourself to the commands of God, and whatever you may think of intrusting all your salvation to the completed work of another, there is one occasion when the strongest swimmer may well be thankful for some such asylum. When a believer comes to die, he may have all the fears and reluctance which are natural to flesh and blood. He is bound for an unknown region—a world to which he has never been before, nay, a world of which he knows not the locality. And he is leaving behind him that old and essential comrade—his corporeal frame—his spirit's mate and servant during all his earthly pilgrimage—and he does not want to be done with it conclusively. He feels as if he should again like to have its telescope and microscope to look upon the works of God; and its vocal organs, to hold communion with those who may wear similar bodies elsewhere. And a whole host of queries and anxieties would rush into his mind if dying, and those things which came after dying, were matters which he had to manage for himself. But all these anxious thoughts are superseded. Arrived at the water's edge he finds a kind and skilful pilot, who undertakes it all. Blessed Saviour, wilt Thou receive my spirit? Yes; and this day it shall be with me in Paradise. And wilt Thou take charge of my sleeping dust? Yes; and I will raise it up at the last day. And wilt Thou take charge of those I leave behind? Yes; and will preserve them alive—let them trust in Me. He then steps into the ark—he sleeps in Jesus—and soon leaps forth to a new world, on the hills of immortality. To every age this history of Noah has been a burning and shining light, and the great lesson it has taught is the *faithfulness* of God—the wisdom of simply trusting Him, and promptly complying with His commands; and it tells to every prisoner of hope, and every pilgrim in the dark, that the Lord knoweth how to deliver all who put their trust in Him. What we stated in the outset was that the Bible supplies us with a biographical theology—that from the peculiar way in which its narratives are written it exemplifies the various perfections of God by showing their developments and dealings with particular persons; and we have taken instances. We have seen that if the Bible exhibits the patience of Job, it exhibits still more strikingly the piteousness of God—and if it relates the faith of Noah it reveals still more signally the faithfulness of Jehovah.

If another instance be desired, we might name the patriarch, Joseph. Viewed on the human side, we have in his memoirs the history of a pious youth—full of brotherly kindness and filial affection, and by his good conduct and great sagacity rising to a station where he was enabled to rescue from ruin his own family, and be the princely benefactor of his unnatural brethren. But viewed on the Divine side, we almost lose sight of the pious youth, and see nothing but God's momentary and marvellous Providence. Parting at the pit's mouth, we see the Arabs riding off with their young captive, and, regardless of his cries, we see the shepherds—his savage and inhuman brethren—returning to their flocks, and resuming their sulky road to Padanaram—to all appearance parted for ever. The desert wind soon swept out the camel tracks, and the next rains new grass sprang up where Jacob's sons had grazed their flocks. But, unseen by man, a thread had uncoiled and split from the edges of that pit, too fine for human eye to see or human sense to follow, but strong as the fiat of Omnipotence. From the mouth of that pit the divided thread travels two different ways—the one from Dothan travels to the vale of Hebron, and enters the tent of an old man with a snowy beard, weeping blinding tears over a bloody mantle, which they spread before him; and it travels on through chequered years of evil and woe, during which the old man draws many a sigh, and amidst all their roughness and rivalry, a guilty secret seems to bind his coarse and selfish sons to one another: till by and by you see a motley caravan taking the southern track,—and quitting the empty garners and burnt acres of Palestine,—the lean asses, and the lame and haggard shepherds limp down to Egypt, and still as they move on the fated filament—the mystic clue—spins out from behind their feet. From the same pit in Dothan, the other branch of the unbroken thread follows the Ishmaelites down to Egypt. It enters the palace door—descends to a dungeon—emerges again—darts up to Pharaoh's throne, and wherever the second chariot in the kingdom rolls that clue uncoils behind it, till after years of grandeur the sumptuous Vizier and the starving shepherds stand front to front, and the thread which split at Dothan meets again in Pharaoh's palace, and becomes an united line once more. And in such a parting guided round to such a meeting, we have not so much a romantic story as the will of God revealed.

PRAYING MOTHERS.

[From the *Gospel Magazine*.]

THE excellent Mrs. Hawkes, the spiritual daughter of the Rev. Richard Cecil, writes in her Diary :—

“*August 9, 1789.*—I have been shutting myself up in my dear departed mother’s chamber, the very walls and furniture of which are sacred. A thousand times have I marked her retiring into it for purposes of devotion. Often have I heard her strong cries and tears to God, and often caught the sound of ‘my children,’ as if that interest was uppermost. At morning, at noon, and at evening, she never failed to retire to read and pray. Thousands of tears has she shed in this chamber, where I have sometimes had the privilege of kneeling down by her side. How present is her image! how sweet my communion with her departed spirit! Little did I then know the value of her intercession for her children, or the weight of her character or example as a Christian. Thank God I know it now; and abhor myself in proportion as I estimate her. Oh that I might but tread in her honoured steps! Oh that her prayers for every one of us may be like bread cast upon the waters, found after many days! Oh, may my dear mother’s God be my God! He graciously carried her through many years of weakness and sorrow. He enabled her to walk worthy of her high calling; and He stood by her in a dying hour. Her last words were, ‘For me to die is gain;’ and, ‘I will pray for my children while I have breath.’”

The late Rev Richard Knill, of St. Petersburg, has left a similar testimony on record :—

“*September 30, 1836.*—Proceeded to Braunton, my native place, and found my brother alive, but weak in body; and, I trust, improving in spiritual things. My soul was greatly comforted by his conversation, especially on the majesty and glory of the Saviour. At night I was accommodated with the same bed which I had often occupied before. The furniture remains just the same as when I was a boy. But my busy thoughts would not let me sleep: I was thinking how God had led me through the journey of life. At last

the light of morning streamed through the little window, and my eye caught sight of the very spot where my sainted mother, more than forty years ago, took my hand and said, 'Richard, my dear, kneel down with me, and I will go to prayer.' I seemed to hear the tones of her voice; I recollected some of her expressions. I burst into tears, and rising from my bed, fell on my knees just on the place where my mother kneeled, and adored the Divine goodness for giving me such a parent. Bless the Lord, O my soul, at every remembrance of his mercy."

Reader, I believe we shall never know till, by God's grace, we get to heaven, what honour God has put upon a pious mother's prayers. There is something in the yearning of a Christian mother's heart for the soul of her child almost divine; it comes nearer to the love of Christ for His sinful and rebellious people, than anything else a creature can feel. There is hope for any man whom God has blessed with a praying mother; for any, that is to say, but the man who can scoff at a mother's prayers, and despise a mother's tears, for the salvation of his soul. That man's heart must be so hardened, his conscience so seared, he is so "past feeling," that if he is saved it will be a miracle of grace indeed.

THE TROUBLESOME MEMBER.

"Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things."—JAMES iii. 5.

To be a "member" of anything is to be a part of it. I have heard of a dear boy who went to a temperance meeting, and was so frightened at what he heard about wine, and so charmed with what he heard about cold water, that he went straight up to the table and signed the pledge, and had the shining medal tied to his button-hole. When he came home, his father said to him, "Why, Johnnie, what have you got there?" Johnnie blushed very red, and stammered out, "Father, I hope you will not be angry.—I hope I have not done wrong, but—but, I am a teetotaller,—and this," (pointing to his medal,) "This shows that I am a member."—He meant that he was now a part of the temperance society. Now, our bodies have a number of different parts, and each of these parts is called a member.

—The eye is a member, so is the ear, and the nose, and the hand, and the foot. And when we think how beautifully they all fit together, and work together,—so smoothly, so easily, so happily, then we are ready to cry with David, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made!”

I daresay some of you have read *Æsop’s* famous fable. The members—the arms, and legs, and the others quarrelled with the stomach, because they declared it was idle ; it just sat still, they said, and ate and drank, and made them all work for it. So they determined that they would not work for it any more—it should starve before they would lift a finger for it. But, of course, they soon had to give it up, for they found that when the stomach got hungry, they got hungry too, and that in starving it they were starving themselves.

Well, I am going to talk to you about one of these “members,” the Tongue,—or rather let us gather around the chair of the Holy Apostle, and listen to what God told him to tell us about our tongues, I am sure it will be interesting.

You see that St. James calls it a “little” member. It is very small if you compare it with your arm or your head. It is like the tiny dot over the *i* in the long word Constantinople! If you could take it out of your mouth, and look at it, you would find that it is exactly the length of your middle finger. . Yes, it is a little member, but though it is little, “it boasteth great things.”

It boasts, first, That it is a very useful member ; secondly, That it is a very powerful member ; thirdly That it is a very mischievous member.

First, it boasts that it is a very useful member.

It is useful in eating.—How could you eat without a tongue? You might have your plum-pudding put into your mouth, but what would you do with it when there without your tongue?—you would have to throw back your head and swallow it whole, as a duck does a worm! It is the tongue that takes hold of the food directly it is put into the mouth, and it keeps pushing it under the teeth till it is ground to pieces, and then it sends it to the back of the mouth, where there is a little trap-door which opens, and it drops down the throat.

It is useful in tasting.—It tells you at once whether a thing is

nice or disagreeable.—If it is nice,—if it is a “sweet morsel,” it seems to play with it till it is all gone, and you have enjoyed every bit of it. If it is disagreeable,—if it is a black draught, or a blue pill, it will not have anything to say to it—it lies flat down, or it creeps into a corner till it has passed by.

It is useful, as it tells you whether you are sick or well.—You know the first thing a doctor does when he comes to see you, is to look at your tongue. Why does he not ask to look at your ear or your thumb? I will tell you the secret. God has ordered it, that the tongue should be covered with one and the same skin as that which covers the inside of our stomachs. Now, the stomach is the main thing in most cases; if that is “out of order,” we cannot be in good health. But how is a doctor to see into your stomach, and know what is going on there?—It is all shut up, and dark as pitch. Why, dear children, the little tongue tells the tale; you put it out, and the doctor looks at it, and if it is red, he knows for certain that your stomach is right; if it is white or black, he knows that your stomach wants medicine.

It is useful for talking.—A man without a tongue would be like a bell without a clapper. It is the tongue which enables you to frame and utter words. If you wish to prove this, just hold your tongue still, and see if you can say, “the road is straight.”

I remember going to a large deaf and dumb school near New York. It was May-day, and there they had their queen and her ladies-in-waiting, and they were as full of glee as you are at such times. And they brought Her Majesty into a room hung with garlands of spring flowers, and they came up to her one by one on her throne, and made her a speech; and yet you did not hear a single word—it was all done by their fingers! And when they were sent out to play again, they raced about, and tumbled over each other, and set to at “bull in the ring,” and “leap frog,” and “Tom, Tom, the piper’s son,” but not a sound was heard! Poor children, they could not talk; they had tongues indeed, but there was something the matter with them, and they had never spoken since they were born!

Thank God, that our tongues can talk. They can talk of great things, and little things; of what we see and hear day by day, and of what happened thousands of years ago! They can talk of heaven

and hell, time and eternity.—Nay, “therewith bless we God the Father.” They are the spokesmen of all the other members. If any one of them has anything to say, they tell it to the tongue, and the tongue speaks it out loud. And, oh, what a relief it is to have such a spokesman when we are oppressed with anxieties! How many hearts would burst if the tongue did not give them vent!

Thus we see that the tongue, though it is a little member, boasts great things as regards its usefulness,—it enables us to eat, to taste, to tell whether we are sick or well, and to talk.

But secondly, I said that it could boast great things as regards its power.

This is the key-note of the chapter,—the power of the tongue. St. James illustrates it in a variety of ways.

He likens the body to a horse’s bit. “Behold, we put bits in the horses’ mouths, that they may obey us, and therewith we turn about their whole body.”

Now, dear children, read God’s own description of a war-horse. “Hast thou given the horse his strength?” (he asks Job.) “Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible! He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength. He goeth out to meet the armed men! He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage! neither believeth he that it is the sound of a trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha! ha! He smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting!” What an animal we have here! Why, if he chose, he could be as independent as a lion is—not a man could lay a hand upon him! Yet to make him serviceable and to keep him in bounds, no chains or bars of iron are needed. We simply slip into his mouth a little piece of steel called a “bit,” and then we turn about his whole body as easily as we turn a weathercock.

Just so, dear children, our tongues affect our entire character and history. If we have a thorough control over our tongues, we can keep ourselves out of “hot water,” and guide ourselves in wisdom’s

safe and pleasant paths. But if we give our tongues liberty to say whatever they please, they will run away with us, and we may expect torn clothes and broken legs.

Again, he likens the tongue to a ship's rudder. "Behold also the ships, which, though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, withersoever the governor listeth."

This too is wonderful. Take a line-of-battle ship, or one of those huge screw-steamers which ply the ocean,—it is as large as a whole row of houses, and it carries enough men to fill a town! How in the world is such a vast machine managed in a hurricane, when the waves are running, as I have seen them, mountains high, and the wind seems as if it would tear the very stars out of the firmament? Go to the stern of the vessel and you will soon see—it is all done by a small wooden instrument called a "helm," or rudder. The sailor stands at a wheel, (to which the helm is fastened by chains,) and according as he turns the wheel right or left, the floating castle turns her bowsprit to the east, or the west.—She cannot do otherwise, the "very small helm" is her master.

Just so, dear children, small as our tongues are, we can steer ourselves into any port we please by them; for until we speak, no one knows what we are. All the birds believed that the owl must be as learned as a judge, because he had such large eyes and looked so grave: and they determined to ask him to be their king. But one night a little sparrow, who happened to be sitting up rather late, heard him hooting and screeching like a lunatic. He reported it to the rest of the birds, and they changed their minds. Now, had Mr. Owl kept his tongue quiet, he would have been king, or at any rate, he would have continued to be thought a sage. And in the same way we rise or fall in people's esteem, according to our talk.—If we talk wisely, they think us wise; if we talk foolishly, they think us foolish; if we talk unkindly, they will think us unkind; if we talk lovingly, they think us loving.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE FAITH OF NOAH.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, JANUARY 29, 1860,

BY THE REV. H. MELVILL, B.D.,

(Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty, and Canon Residentary.)

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL'S, LONDON.

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."—HEB. xi. 7.

THE chapter in which our text occurs begins with a definition of faith, and this definition is illustrated by the instances successively adduced—"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In other words, faith is that which gives to invisible and future things the consistency and reality of visible and present things, and thus causes objects which do not address themselves to our senses to have as thorough an influence upon us as others would do. And among the instances which illustrate this definition there is none more appropriate than that of the patriarch Noah, for Noah acted on the supposition that a calamity of which there were no present signs were just as certain as though already laying waste the earth. So that in Noah faith took literally, as it were, the place of sense, and gave to the invisible all the power of the visible. This is the first thought which the apostle points out to you in the instance of Noah. "He was warned of God of things not seen as yet," and believing the warning immediately set about preparing an ark.

You are to observe that about one thousand five hundred years had elapsed since the creation of man—no inconsiderable period in the history of our race—but although throughout this long period wickedness had been continually and rapidly on the increase, it does not appear that God had ever judicially interferred—ever come forth in his character of moral governor, and exacted punishment from his creatures. Our first parents had been exiled from Paradise in consequence of their disobedience, but even in this case the threatening of death seemed hardly to have been executed. Adam and Eve had been banished from Paradise, but the temporal vengeance taken was, perhaps, hardly such as to impress with great terror the minds of their de-

The Mother's Magazine. May, 1860.

scendants; and when even murder had been committed, and Abel had fallen by his brother's hand, God did not at once smite down the assassin. He set indeed a mark on his forehead, but it was a mark of preservation, and Cain remained on earth, and built a city, and called it after the name of his son. Thus the observable thing is, that there had never as yet been any striking interference of God in his character of moral governor; and, if experience might be taken as a test, temporal vengeance was not to be looked for in the course of his dealings. Therefore, the probabilities, if we may use such a word, were altogether against such an event as the flood. There was no precedent to which men might appeal; on the contrary, if they might judge from what had occurred, they might conclude that there would be no interruption of the usual order of things, and that even if God threatened, the threatening would not be brought literally to pass. On this ground, if there were no other, we might justly extol the faith of Noah. It was faith, if we may use the words, against experience, and we, "on whom the ends of the earth have come," having always had experience to refer to, can hardly estimate the difficulty and greatness of such a faith.

And then there was something vastly improbable in the threatened visitation itself. Day succeeded to night with unvarying regularity, and season followed season; whence was to come the multitude of waters? What oceans were they that could cover the lofty mountain tops? Cannot you imagine how the wicked would taunt the patriarch—how they would ridicule his fears, and amuse themselves with their absurdity? They would point to the round unclouded sun, as he rose morning after morning, and went forward in his everlasting march; they would point to the rivers as they rolled on quietly in their wonted channels, and to the showers as they came down gently to fertilize the earth. What signs were there, they would ask, in this fixedness of nature in all her operations, that there was about to be such a breaking up, as Noah predicted, of the established order of things? Who could believe that God would indeed overwhelm and lay waste his fair creation, even if provoked to punish the sinfulness of his creatures?

And then it was not merely that Noah had to believe the word of God in the face of a vast improbability, and of incessant ridicule, he had to act upon this belief, and to busy himself through long years in preparing the ark. He might not keep his belief to himself, shut up in the recesses of his own heart, neither might he be content with expressing it in the way of warning and counsel to those that were around, he must labor publicly at a task which could only draw on him animadversion and scorn, and that not for a short time, but for year after year, though there were no gathering tokens that his prophecy would be fulfilled. If it were a great act of faith under the then circumstances of the world, to expect a deluge at all, on the authority of God's word, it marked an almost inconceivably strong faith that the expectation was kept up for more than a century, and that preparation was all along being made against the threatened visitation. The building the ark was even yet more wonderful than the believing the flood, though the one might seem naturally to follow the other. They were not days of seamanship. So far as we know, men had then no skill in navigation, and the ark may have been the first vessel constructed—the first, at all events, that was to carry any considerable freight. And then, if this had been the case, had the men of that day possessed all the nautical science of the present, what hope

THE FAITH OF NOAH.

could there have seemed that any ship would swim whilst the solid earth itself went down in the accumulated waters.

There must have been as many and bitter sneers at the preposterous manner in which Noah hoped to escape as the absurd apprehension by which he was possessed—"Better," might have been the popular exclamation, "to spend in pleasure what remains of life, even if Noah should prove a prophet of truth—better than wearing it away in providing a refuge which would be sure to fail in the hour of need!" But Noah laboured in faith, and great faith there was in every stroke of the hammer, and in every blow of the axe, for he could never put his workmanship to any practical test. The ark was not to float till the flood was on the earth, and therefore he had no power of proving by any previous experiment whether his toil would be of any use. It was not as with ourselves, who, bidden to seek deliverance from wrath, in a certain given way, know that way to have been tried by thousands who have gone before, and never tried without success. With Noah, to speak after the manner of men, it was all a speculation, experience was quite against the occurrence of the threatened calamity, and he had nothing to say as to the suitableness of the appointed mode of escape.

Will not, then, Noah be a mighty witness against us, if we practically disbelieve the threatenings of God, and neglect to comply with the directions given to all who are desirous of safety. It was of that second coming of Christ for which the Church professes to be looking that the deluge, with its attendant circumstances, was eminently typical; and we are abundantly assured in Scripture that the conduct of men with reference to this awful event will be the accurate copy of that of the contemporaries of Noah. You find St. Peter says—"There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lust, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Here you see the very same appeal to the fixedness of nature and her laws as we may suppose to have been made by men before the flood, and that there will be the same perseverance in carelessness, and then the same sudden outbreak of disaster, is expressively affirmed by Christ himself—"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Thus the parallel is to be the very closest; the believers are to be scoffingly asked for signs and tokens that what they believe is at hand—"Where, in yonder unchanged firmament, are the harbingers of this fiery deluge? Where in the courses of the stars, in the successions of the seasons, is there evidence of an appointed change in the laws of the universe—of a departure from the ordinances that have subsisted for thousands of years." And in this way will the apparent proceedings of nature, though it can be no argument whatsoever against the word of the God of nature, be wrested into an encouragement to infidelity and dissoluteness, till at length, as though in a moment, perhaps on a day when the sun had arisen as usual, and men had gone forth to their accustomed business or pleasure, and nothing showed nearness of a fearful visitation, the sign of the Son of man will be seen in the heavens, and the waves of fire roll full upon the earth. And if that day be near at hand, will it overtake us as a thief? Are we as men who

THE FAITH OF NOAH.

are building an ark, or as others, who think that no ark will be needed? Oh, these are questions which each of us should be honest in putting to himself. We will not now stay to ply you with them more closely; but we must entreat you to observe that there is a great similarity of circumstances between ourselves and the antediluvian world, and that Noah is set before us as a pattern. We are not to be content with admiring his faith; we are to labor at imitating his faith. And yet what is demanded of us is not, as you must see, near as difficult as what was demanded of the patriarch. We have experience to aid our belief that God will interpose as an avenger of wickedness. There is a vast difference between our circumstances and those of men who lived before the flood, inasmuch as we have the registered histories of Divine interposition, and cannot therefore plead the little likelihood of a temporal visitation, whereas they were not warned by foregoing events, but were in the position of those who would be the first to experience how God would take vengeance. If we persist in thinking that God will leave the world undisturbed in its wickedness, just because there may be no present signs of his coming forth as an avenger, we set ourselves against the witness of past generations; whereas the men of Noah's day had not been plied with such a testimony, but were themselves to begin furnishing that testimony to the world. Observe the difference. We have—the men of Noah's day had not—experience to aid our belief that none shall perish who seek deliverance in the way marked out by God, and therefore will Noah indeed rise up in the judgment as a swift witness against us, if we be found deaf to the threatening or neglectful of the deliverance; for although, humanly speaking, there was nothing to support him, but rather, on the contrary, everything to make him waver and refuse, yet nevertheless, "By faith Noah, being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

Now we hardly know whether the patriarchal histories obtain from us their due share of attention. We become familiar with them in childhood, and perhaps value them more as the record of strange incidents than as the exhibition of fine examples. There is something so surprising, for instance, in the account of the deluge—something that so engages the imagination, like a tale of wonder and of terror, that we may easily come to the viewing in Noah and his family, of a romantic and hair-breadth escape, and seldom think of them in a moral point of view, as the great witnesses for God, who believed his threatenings, and thus obtained his promises. Perhaps few of us are aware of the degree in which we carry with us through life our nursery recollections, and of the influence which those recollections have on our Scriptural knowledge. If we had never read the history of the flood till we had come to ripe years, we should probably on the very first perusal consider carefully the conduct of Noah, as well as the amazing facts presented to our notice; but because we have been accustomed almost from our infancy to the thinking on the facts of the deluge—facts which get a strong possession of the imagination—just like those in a modern day of the earthquake at Lisbon—we go on with a sort of awful remembrance of an amazing catastrophe, but with no correct appreciation of the faith which may have been displayed, or of the example which may have been set. Therefore are we anxious to set clearly before you what was admirable in the conduct of Noah, when it is said, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." And now, on the same account, and with the same view, we ask your close attention to what is further said—that by all this Noah "condemned the world, and became heir to the righteousness which is by faith."

THE FAITH OF NOAH.

There cannot be required any very lengthened statements to prove to you that the world was left inexorable, when Noah had laboured for a hundred and twenty years at the ark, without prevailing on his fellow-men to prepare for the threatened visitation. We have no means of ascertaining whether Noah wrought miracles, or gave any evidence from which it might be gathered that God had indeed instructed him to foretell a deluge; but in patriarchal times the intercourse of man with God appears to be so direct, and with so many visible accompaniments, that there is scarce room for question that all must have been aware of the origin of the message which Noah delivered. Let us, however, take the case on its very lowest ground. Let us suppose that no positive demonstration was given to the prophetic office of the patriarch. At all events, there must have been a very high probability that he spake only truth. It was almost incredible that he could have been deceived himself, or that he could have been labouring to deceive others, throughout so long a period as a hundred and twenty years—a period, moreover, spent in unremitting toil, which seems sufficiently to show that he must be sincere, and could hardly be an enthusiast; and we wish very much to impress upon you, that in all such cases men are bound to act on a probability, if they cannot reach a certainty. I doubt whether this is sufficiently attended to, when the matter of evidence is brought under discussion. It is very easy for a man to say that he has doubts as to the existence of a God; that he cannot satisfy himself that there is a God; and that, therefore, he must be inexcusable in neglecting all religion: but we deny altogether the justness of his conclusion, even if we admit the reality of his doubts. He may not be able to prove that there is a God: is he able to prove that there is not a God? There is an immeasurable difference between these cases; and never, perhaps, has the man arisen who has presumed to say that he could make out a proof against the existence of a God. I may not be able to prove that there is a God, because I may not seem to myself to find sufficient evidence in the narrow section of creation which alone is open to my inquiries. But what of this? To be able actually to prove that there is not a God, this would require that I should have visited every spot in the universe; for whilst there is a single spot which I had not inspected, who is to assure me that it does not contain the evidence which I have elsewhere been searching for in vain? Nay, I must have existed through every moment of the past eternity, and that, too, in every point of unlimited space; seeing that, however God may now be silent, or silent in certain districts of immensity, how can I be sure that he did not speak audibly and convincingly at some former time, or to the inhabitants of some distant world? So that—and if this be a startling fact, it is a fact nevertheless—before a man can prove, absolutely prove, that there is no such being as God, he must literally be himself possessed of the attributes of God. Strange as it may sound, none but an omniscient, omnipresent being could demonstrate that there is no omniscient, omnipresent being; and thus the furthest point to which the most subtle reasoner can go, is the denying that there is evidence enough for the existence of a God. He must always stop far short of affirming that there is evidence enough against the existence of a God. But since he cannot prove that there is not a God, he is bound, we contend, to act upon the supposition that there is a God. If he cannot reach a certainty, he ought, as a rational calculating being, to proceed upon the probability. The probability will be quite enough to condemn him. There is far too much at stake, far too much depends on the existence of a God, to allow of his being justified in living as though there were no Supreme Ruler, when he has not been able to prove that there is no Supreme Ruler. If it should turn out that there is no God, he will not have

been injured through having lived as though there were; but if it should turn out that there is a God, he will be irremediably lost through having lived as though there were none. So that he is bound to do just what we are sure he would in any of the transactions of life—give the benefit of the doubt to the prudent side, and act on the probability that there is a God, till he hath established, certainly, that there is not a God.

And the case is very much the same in regard of revealed religion. Yes—hear it, all ye who may be inclined to sceptical opinions, or who may be disposed to look lightly on the pretensions of Christianity!—we say, the case is much the same with the truths of revealed religion as with the great fact of the existence of a God. A man cannot make up his mind as to the evidences of his Christianity; he is not satisfied with the proofs which are advanced that Christianity is divine. Very well; be it so. Is he able to prove, absolutely to prove, that Christianity is not divine? Is he able actually to overthrow, to destroy the evidences on which it professes to rest; and thus to prove, absolutely to prove, that Christianity is but an imposture, and the Bible but a forgery? Certainly, no man who knows anything of the state of the Christian argument would profess to do this. Like the Atheist, the Deist must stop at a doubt, and cannot advance to a certainty; and we contend that the doubt ought to suffice to make him live as a Christian, and that it will assuredly condemn him if he do not. The risk which he would run by acting on the supposition that Christianity is a fable, because we do not see convincing proof that Christianity is truth, this risk is far too vast to be run by an accountable creature: it would not be run by such a creature if only temporal interests were at stake; and therefore is he an overwhelming witness against himself, if he run it when the interests at stake are eternal. So that no one can fairly shield himself under his doubts as to the truth of Christianity. He must be able to prove, incontrovertibly to prove, the falsehood of Christianity, else Christianity has an urgent claim on him as a calculating being—a being with forethought, accustomed to be guided by probabilities; and if this claim be neglected, so that he virtually takes for granted the falsehood which he is unable to prove, why, he will justly come into much the same condemnation as if he had acknowledged the truth, and then never submitted to its influence.

And these cases are all naturally suggested by that in our text; for Noah, you observe, condemned the world by building the ark, though we have no reason to think that he gave supernatural tokens in proof that he spoke in God's name; but there was, at all events, a very great probability that Noah affirmed truth; and when, if indeed a deluge were at hand, so much was to be lost by disbelieving, and so much gained by believing, it was the part of every rational being to act on the probability and he who did not thus act, had himself only to blame, when the waters were abroad in their strength, and he without a shelter against the climbing tide.

And if Noah condemned those around him, by preparing the ark, it is only what every man now does who is careful as to the saving of his soul. There is something very affecting in the thought, that a man cannot save himself without condemning others. But so it is. The result is unavoidable, and follows necessarily from the connection in which men stand, the sameness of their duty, and the sameness of their danger. For why should one man employ life on preparing for death, and another squander it on perishable things? Is it that the first has much at stake, and that the second has nothing at stake? Is it that the first is immortal, but that the second is doomed to annihilation? On the contrary, we all know that there can be no difference between the two—that both have the same interest in futurity, and that

what it becomes the one to do for his security, it must equally become the other to do. Then, either the attentive man is taking unnecessary pains, or the careless man may be charged with unpardonable negligence. Which is right? We reply that, on the lowest calculation, the man who acts for eternity, acts as a man—a rational, accountable creature. Let revealed theology prove at last a forgery, let natural theology prove a fable; still, forasmuch as the proof cannot now be made out, it is the part of prudence to suppose them to be true, and to act on the supposition. Be there no hell, let it be priestcraft, folly, enthusiasm, which has depicted a state of fearful retribution. Can you make sure that there is no hell? Can you demonstrate that there is no hell? If not, we want words in which to describe the madness of the man who practically takes for granted that there is no hell, leaving the proof to be given, where if he be in the wrong, it must be given in his own agonies, his own excruciating, everlasting unhappiness. And thus the man who acts on the supposition that there is a future state, condemns every other who acts on the opposite supposition—convicts him, even on the showing of his own doubts, of the foul determination to peril eternity on an insignificant chance. He thus lays up a witness which, if there come a judgment at all, must leave him without a word in arrest of a sentence of lasting misery and shame. We cannot help it; we cannot detach ourselves from others; there are fibres of association which will not be broken. We cannot destroy this witnessing power of example; and everyone of us who forsakes sin, and struggles for a happiness beyond the grave, oh! he makes himself, he cannot help making himself, the accuser of friends, and kinsmen, and neighbours, who persist in ungodliness; and as surely must he be pointed at as proving them inexcusable, if swept down at last by the deluge of fire, as Noah was declared, when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the mountain tops buried, to have “condemned the world, by preparing an ark to the saving of his house.”

And, now, the last thing said of the patriarch in our text is, that he became “heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” The expression is no otherwise to be interpreted than as denoting that Noah obtained an interest in all the promises of the gospel, though he lived so long before the coming of Christ. “The righteousness which is by faith,” is undoubtedly that righteousness which is imputed to believers in a Mediator; and we must, therefore, suppose that in building the ark and preparing against the deluge, Noah had respect to the redemption of the world, already promised, though but dimly shadowed forth. We may believe that he was symbolically taught, through all the circumstances of the flood, even as Abraham was, through the offering up of Isaac; and as Abraham was made to see Christ’s day, as he reared the altar and laid in order the wood, so probably was Noah, as he hewed down the trees, and fashioned them into the ark. Nay, it would appear that not only was Noah thus instructed himself, but that he was also instrumental to the instructing of others. Very remarkable were the words used by Lamech, when he gave his son Noah his name, which name signifies “rest”—“This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.” Some special blessing, you perceive, was looked for through Noah—something which should encourage fallen man, as he wrestled with the soil on which sin had brought down the malediction of God. And if Noah preached the gospel by declaring wrath, and at the same time preparing an ark, the words of Lamech came accurately to pass. There was comfort for man, comfort for him, whilst in the sweat of his face he eat the bread of bitterness and affliction. He heard, indeed, that the wrath of God would sweep away the wicked; but he heard also, that a refuge would be provided, into which all who fled would find perfect safety.

THE FAITH OF NOAH.

We need not insist on the fact, that a typical character attaches to the flood. We can hardly doubt that in olden times God planned his judicial interferences with the distinct design of their serving as figures of other and yet more grievous visitations. For example, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah evidently had reference in its peculiar character to that grand catastrophe, that of this earth being consumed by fire from heaven. So you find that the plagues which laid waste the land of Egypt answer most accurately to those which are described as falling upon the world after the opening of the seven last vials. But of all the registered interferences of God, there is, perhaps, none so eminently and accurately typical as the flood. The deliverance of Noah and his family, and the mode of their deliverance; these were most exact representations of the salvation of the believing remnant, and of the method in which it will be effected. As the ark rose, the image of the church rose—that ark at whose helm sits the Saviour, who commands the winds and the waves, which gathers various characters within itself, as that of Noah gathered the lion and the lamb—none being rejected, but all laying aside the dispositions which would cause enmity and confusion. It was a great typical lesson: even ourselves, with all the advantages of revelation, must be benefitted by its study. Let it not be lost upon you, men and brethren. As there was but one method of escape from the flood, there is but one from the wrath revealed against unrighteousness. You perish, if not found in Christ; you cannot perish if you flee to him as your deliverer! The waves of fire will overrun the earth; but those who have sought safety in Christ shall not be confounded in the perilous time. The fire shall have no power over them, and not a hair of their head shall be singed; and as, when the flood went down, Noah came forth on the fresh green earth, purified by its baptism, and offered sacrifices and praises to his Maker, so, when the flame shall have eradicated all pollution from this creation, the believers in Christ, glowing with gratitude to their Redeemer, shall joyfully take possession of “new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” God grant unto all of us that, fleeing now to the ark, which has been mercifully provided, we may be found at last amongst that rejoicing company who shall ascribe for ever worthiness to the Lamb—that Lamb who bought them by his agonies, and crowned them with his triumphs!

Sketches and Essays.

"BUT NOW ARE THEY HID FROM THINE EYES."

(LUKE XIX. 42.)

BY THE LATE REV. WILLIAM JAY.

WHEN Pharaoh saw there was respite, he hardened his heart. Solomon tells us, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil." But God's keeping silence is not approbation. His long-suffering is not even connivance. He can be merciful, without allowing us to trifle and insult Him for ever. His patience has its rules and its bounds. And Jerusalem knew this.

Much has been said on what is termed a day of grace; and much which we neither admire nor believe. We are not authorised to say any one is beyond hope, while he is yet in life. Manassch would have seemed very likely to be such a desperate character; but *he* obtained mercy.

"And while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return."

If we cannot view any of our fellow-creatures as beyond the possibility of salvation, so we have no rule by which we can absolutely determine against ourselves; yet there are several things of fearful import, to which we do well to attend.

First. The language of the word of God is fearful. "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." "Israel would none of Me; so I gave them up to their own hearts' lust." "In thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee." "If we sin wilfully after that

The Mother's Magazine. June, 1860.

we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin ; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." "Because I have called, and ye refused : I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded ; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof : I also will laugh at your calamity ; I will mock when your fear cometh." "Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation." We offer no commentary on these passages ; but, surely, their language is fearful.

Secondly. We know that final impenitency is irrecoverably hopeless ; and *with life* all our opportunities end—and this is fearful. It would not be kindness, but cruelty, to flatter men with a contrary expectation. Search the Scripture, and you will always find a difference between the present and the future. One is a state of trial, the other of decision. The one is sowing, the other reaping ; and whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Is not this sufficient to induce us to seek the Lord while He may be found, and to call upon Him while He is near ?

Thirdly. This life, upon which everything depends, is very brief—this is fearful. Look at the images of Scripture : a flower of the field ; a flood ; a watch in the night ; a dream ; a vapour. Consider the deaths that come under your own observation. Observe the frailty of your frame. Remember the numberless diseases and accidents to which you are exposed. Think of your pulse, where the question is asked sixty times every minute, whether you shall live or die.

Fourthly. Our continuance here is as uncertain as it is short—this is fearful. "I have not had," said a good man, "a to-morrow for years." It would be well if we had not. Indeed, we have not in *reality*, whatever we may have in imagination. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow ; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

Fifthly. Before this short and uncertain period terminates, many opportunities and advantages may elapse, to return no more—this is fearful. Many convictions may die away, no more to be renewed again unto repentance. We may be deprived of reason ; and religion can only operate through the medium of thought. Old age helps on insensibility ; and before we are aware, though unpardoned

and unrenewed, we may become incapable of a moral change. The Gospel may be removed from us. We may be placed where it is not in our power to attend it. We may become deaf, or blind. Sickness may confine us to a room of pain, or a bed of languishing. The influences necessary to render the means of grace effectual may be withholden. Though Paul plants, and Apollos waters, God alone gives the increase: and though we can do nothing to deserve His grace, we may provoke His anger; and He may judicially give us up to a reprobate mind. The heart is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin—and no less so by familiarity with divine things. And is not this the case with many? Once their consciences smote them. They dropped a tear upon their Bible. When walking alone, among the works of God, they prayed, "Lord, I am Thine; save me." But Felix no more trembles. And the Gadarenes have besought the healer of their neighbours, and the reprovcr of their sin, to depart out of their coast; and he is gone for ever!

LIGHT AT EVENTIDE.

"AT evening time it shall be light." Dread not thy days of weariness, dread not thine hours of decay, O, soldier of the cross: new lights shall burn when the old lights are quenched; new candles shall be lit when the lamps of life are dim. Fear not! The night of thy decay may be coming on, but "at evening time it shall be light." At evening time the Christian has many lights that he never had before, lit by the Holy Spirit, and shining by His light. There is the light of bright experience. He can look back, and he can raise his Ebenezer, saying, "Hither, by Thy help, I've come." He can look back at his old Bible, the light of his youth, and he can say, "This promise has been proved to me, this covenant has been proved true. I have thumbed my Bible many a year; I have never yet thumbed a broken promise. The promises have all been kept to me; 'not one good thing has failed.' " And then, if he has served God he has another light to cheer him; he has the light of the remembrance of what God had enabled him to do. Some of his spiritual children come in and talk of times when God blessed his conversion

to their souls. He looks upon his children, and his children's children, rising up to call the Redeemer blessed; at evening time he has a light. But at last the night comes in real earnest; he has lived long enough, and he must die. The old man is on his bed; the sun is going down, and he has no more light. "Throw up the windows, let me look for the last time into the open sky," says the old man. The sun has gone down; I cannot see the mountains yonder; they are all a mass of mist; my eyes are dim; and the world is dim too. Suddenly a light shoots across his face, and he cries, "O, daughter! daughter, here! I can see another sun rising. Did you not tell me that the sun went down just now? Lo, I see another; and where those hills used to be in the landscape, those hills that were lost in the darkness, daughter, I can see hills that seem like burning brass; and, methinks, upon that summit I can see a city as bright as jasper, Yes, and I see a gate opening, and spirits coming forth. What is that they say? O they sing! they sing! Is this death?" And ere he has asked the question, he hath gone where he needs not to answer it, for death is all unknown. Yes, he has passed the gates of pearl; his feet are on the streets of gold; his head is bedecked with a crown of immortality; the palm-branch of eternal victory is in his hand. God hath accepted him in the Beloved.

THE DISCIPLINE OF PIETY FOR USE AND PERMANENCE.

By G. B. CHEEVER, D.D.

WE see plainly what kind of piety is needed in a world so full of sin and self-delusion. Its springs must be in God, it must be fed by His grace, its life must be hid with Christ in God. Its rule must be the word of God. Concerning the works of men, by the Word of Thy lips have I kept me from the paths of the Destroyer. Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to Thy Word. Not what is acceptable or pleasing in the sight of man, not what is popular or highly esteemed among

men is to be the rule, but what is commanded in God's Word. That is one of the highest and most important marks of true religious principle, when a man settles everything by God's Word. It is written, It is written, It is written, was the rule of our Blessed Lord's own life and ministry, and if we would begin to walk as Christ also walked, it must be ours.

Then, also, that that may be the rule, and that it may continue to be so, there must be great watchfulness unto prayer. It is only thus that the Word of God becomes a living indwelling light and principle, a conquering power, judging all things, overcoming all things. In prayer God teaches the Christian out of His Word, and interprets it for him, and writes it upon his heart, and so makes him a living epistle of it in his daily character. In prayer he receives strength and grace to carry the Word into practice, and this is the only way to strengthen principle, and make it triumphant over selfishness and sin. If it be not thus guarded, thus rooted and grounded in God's Word, and vivified in prayer, it will assuredly fail in the practical application. It disappears unaccountably in the wear and tear of life; it is carried off by side winds and currents; it is neutralized in men's business; it is lost out of sight in a chaos of operations, where self is uppermost, and God and heaven are out of view.

It reminds us of an account we once saw respecting the waste and defalcation in the mint, in the processes of melting, assaying, and coining the gold dust from California. It was found that upwards of eighteen ounces of gold had gone up the chimneys with the smoke, and hundreds of ounces had been deposited on the flat roofs of neighbouring buildings. All this in the process of converting the gold into its form for circulating medium. It was found that by building the chimneys in a zigzag form, they were enabled to save much of the stray dust, collecting it even from the soot. But there is no such method of reclaiming a man's lost principles, or getting back the waste elements of his piety, the conscience and religious feelings that have gone off into the air, or become invisible and useless under the flakes of smoke and coal-dust in the melting-shop of our existence, amidst the cares of this world. Incessant watchfulness unto prayer is needed, or a man's piety will be as when a labourer putteth wages into a bag with holes.

Then both the word and prayer are efficacious simply in and through Christ, in the union of the soul with him, in making that union closer, and quickening it as the life of the soul. The condition of strength and life, and of growth in the life of Christ, is not merely if ye keep close to the Word, but to the Saviour, as the Word, the Way, the Truth, the Life. *If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you.* The abiding in Christ is the condition of His words abiding in us, as the element of life and power, and the instrument of this communion and imparted life is prayer. Then let a man go in the strength of that prayer. Let him put to use everything he gains, and his gains will be repaid, and grace and peace shall be multiplied unto him, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

We are not to be discouraged or thrown back by the temptations and difficulties which are the trial of our faith. An account of the manner in which the miners on a mountain send down their loaded cars in safety, by the intervals of ascending inclinations, up which the preceding downward impulse and headway carries them to begin afterwards a new descent, on a zigzag farther down, may remind you of God's method, may illustrate His way of discipline. We do little or nothing without zigzags, and sometimes when we seem to be going on prosperously, if we were let go with such headway, we should dash our carriages and ourselves to pieces ; but God sets us suddenly, yet naturally, on an upward inclination, where the speed is checked, and the impulse only enables to get fairly to the summit for a new descent without danger. The going back is only the necessary mode of securing what you would otherwise have lost in going forward. Difficulties are essential to success, and some times our very prayers are answered by the intervention of seasonable difficulties. A cold day in midsummer is sometimes very important to set the rapidly advancing vegetation, to concentrate and consolidate what has been gained. Thus God sets and establishes His own summer work of grace with us, by frosty days and obstacles.

Difficulties and trials, upon an ardent nature and purpose, are like the blows of a blacksmith's hammer upon the red-hot glowing iron ; between the anvil and the hammer, the object of the heat is

accomplished, and the fire, that alone would only have softened the metal to no purpose, is made a preparation for refining, shaping, and hardening it, so as never to wear out. Just so, a burning moral purpose and impulse, instead of being thwarted and overcome by repression, opposition, and antagonistic blows, is only beaten into permanent shape for conquest, being welded, confirmed, and afterwards edged like a battle-axe, or sharpened as the sword of the Spirit, to do the work of the Lord. In thus preparing His instruments, God strikes when the iron is hot, and so must we; neither must we give way to despondency, because we find ourselves stricken and smitten of God, or subjected to severe discipline.

Every man's piety must be tried, tried in this world, to be proved for another, tried now, to see if he has that practical faith which alone can prepare him for God's presence and glory in heaven. *Tried now*, for this is the only time of trial; and when it is over, then cometh the eternal end, and as a man's character is when he dies, so will it remain in him and upon him, and he in it, for ever and ever. Neither trials nor mercies in the next world could ever produce a change, that God's wondrous discipline failed to produce in this world.

In the parish of Haworth, in Yorkshire, the scene for twenty years of the ministrations of the Rev. Mr. Grimshawe, there was a man of somewhat distinguished family, and very large property, who died but a few years ago. We are told that this man's great amusement and occupation through life had been prize and cock-fighting. When he was confined to his chamber, with what he knew would be his last illness, he had his fighting cocks brought up there, and watched the bloody battle from his bed. As his mortal disease increased, and it became impossible for him to turn, so as to follow the combat, he had looking-glasses arranged in such a manner around him and above him, as he lay, that he could still see the creatures fighting. And in this manner he died. Does any man imagine that he went to heaven? And if the ministry of heaven on earth could not change him, would the fires of perdition prepare him for heaven?

FARTHEST FROM THE KINGDOM.

It is not always that man or woman whose sins are of the deepest dye, that stands in the greatest danger of being shut out of the kingdom of heaven. The crimes of the penitent thief had been so great that even sinful men had decreed their punishment by death. But no matter how great they may have been, the very moment that his faith laid hold on an atoning Saviour, that moment saw them all forgiven, and the dying thief a joint-heir with Christ of heaven.

Some years ago, I took occasion to address a young lady upon the subject of religion. I hardly knew how to approach her, for I half supposed, from what I had seen from her character, that she was already a Christian. Her life was exemplary to a high degree. A devoted daughter, a constant attendant upon the means of grace, almost always ready to make sacrifices for others, I judged that she might have been taught of Jesus. We were talking of sin in the heart, and she spoke quite freely.

"Yes," said she, "it is indeed dreadful. I abhor it. It is constantly giving me pain."

I was led from her answer to hope still more from her, and went on to speak of sin being one of the Christian's heaviest burdens, and the looking in upon the sinful feelings, thoughts, and motives that hold sway over our poor sin-sick soul, as the greatest cause of suffering on this side the grave.

"Oh," she answered, "it is not *that* I mean. Sin gives me pain, but it is the *sins of others*. When I see sin, I feel as if I could not bear it. As for my own motives and feelings, I always try to do what I think is right, and so of course I do not feel badly about my own sins!"

I looked up at her quickly. My heart swelled, but there was an expression of complacency in her countenance that closed my lips. She stood wrapped all about in the robe of her own righteousness and seemed to think that she had no need of a better.

She stands there yet. Neither the Bible that she studies from week to week, the voice of death calling away her loved ones, nor the solemn warning uttered from the pulpit, "*Except ye repent, ye*

shall all likewise perish," seems to have reached her soul. The Spirit of God alone can show her the depravity of her rebellious heart.

If this is your view of sin, you have need to mourn with anguish that cannot be uttered. The word of our Lord is sure, and He says, "I came not to call the *righteous*, but *sinner*s to repentance." "There is no other name given under heaven, whereby we may be saved."

I SOUGHT THEE, O MY SAVIOUR.

I sought Thee, O my Saviour, when guilt my soul oppress'd,
When all this world's enchantments had failed to give me rest;
I laid the heavy burden of my transgressions where
No soul that sues for pardon is banished to despair.

I sought Thee, O my Saviour, when fierce temptations rose,
And hell's infernal legions tried my progress to oppose;
I prayed that Thou would'st aid me in every trying hour,
And by Thine arm I overcame, strong in Almighty power.

I sought Thee, O my Saviour, when earthly joys decayed,
When cherished hopes had bloomed awhile, and blossomed but to fade;
Ah! then I felt how sweet it is to have a home on high,
A bright, celestial, pure abode, beyond the starry sky.

I sought Thee, O my Saviour, when friends beloved of yore
Had turned away, and, perhaps, forgot they ever loved before;
How comforting Thy love to me, that Thou wilt ever prove,
Unchanging in Thy friendship, and constant in Thy love.

O, may I ever seek Thee, and find Thee always near,
To soothe the wounded heart, and wipe away each falling tear;
O, never let me seek again on earth a place of rest,
But rather bid me look to Thee, and be for ever blest.

I'll seek Thee, O my Saviour, when health and hope have fled,
When weeping friends have gathered fast around my dying bed;
O, may this brow, which often wears a shade of mournful care,
Be tranquil as a summer's eve, without an anxious fear.

Be Thou my constant Guardian, ever watching by my side,
May Thy right arm sustain me, while stemming Jordan's tide;
O, smooth my dying pillow with words of joy and peace,
Then take Thy servant to Thyself, to rest in *perfect* peace.

THE TROUBLESOME MEMBER.

"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

I saw a terrible fire the other night, or rather, I saw the reflection of it in the sky,—the heavens were crimsoned with it! It burnt a large manufactory to the ground; and the firemen had hard work to save the buildings which surrounded it; they poured streams of water on it from fifteen engines, but it licked it up, and would have its course till the walls gave way. That terrible fire was kindled by a farthing rushlight! Some years ago I saw the black ashes of what the night before was a splendid farm-yard, with its hay-ricks, corn-stacks, stables, and cow-sheds, and lying about upon them were the carcasses of a number of miserable horses and bullocks which had perished in the flames. All that was done by a lucifer match. In America, the Indians strike a spark from a flint and steel, and set fire to the dry grass, and the flames spread and spread until they sweep like a roaring torrent over prairies as large as England, and men and cattle have to flee for their lives! Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! and the tongue is a fire!" A few rash words will set a family, a neighbourhood, a nation by the ears: they often have done so. Half the lawsuits and half the wars have been brought about by the tongue. Husband and wife have separated for ever, children have forsaken their homes, bosom friends have become bitter foes, all on account of fiery arrows shot by this powerful little member! Which of you, dear children, has not felt its power?

Let us notice its mischievousness!

St. James gives it a bad character. He tells us that it is "untameable," that it is "full of deadly poison," and worst of all, that "it is set on fire of hell!"

The tongue is untameable.

"Every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind; but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil."

Van Amburgh's lions were so tame that he would go into their cage, and make a pillow of one and a feather-bed of another, and then he would put his head into the mouth of a third. I had an eagle so tame, that it would eat from my hands, and allow me to

stroke its feathers. The jugglers in Bengal carry about live snakes twisted round their necks, and they sleep in their bosoms. The Egyptians train ugly crocodiles to follow them like a dog. And you know how easily gold and other fish may be taught to swim after those who feed them. The creatures which are of so much use to us—the cow, the ass, the sheep, the cat, the pig, were all wild once, but they have been tamed and made our slaves. But there is one thing, smaller than any of these, which is untameable. “The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil!”

Of course this does not mean that it never can be, and never is, brought under control—this would not be true; it merely means that it is impossible wholly to subdue it. God can and does tame it by His grace; and when the heart is changed and made new, the tongue is changed as well. True Christians make a very different use of their tongues from what others do; they make a very different use of them after they are converted from what they did before. O yes! God, by His grace, can tame even this unruly member. But even when it is tamed, it will sometimes break out, and Abraham says, “She is my sister;” and Moses says, “Ye rebels, must I bring water out of this rock for you?” and Jonah says, “I do well to be angry;” and Job curses the day of his birth; and David says in his haste, “All men are liars!” and Peter curses and swears, and says, “I know not the man!” And if these pre-eminent saints found their tongues so unruly now and then, how true it is that the tongue can no man tame!

Again, St. James tells us that it is “full of deadly poison.”

I have said that the tongue and the stomach are both of a piece. I may also say, that the tongue and the heart are both of a piece; and as all have wicked hearts by nature, so our tongues are sure to be wicked. You may judge of the heart by the tongue, and of the tongue by the heart. One who could not be mistaken has declared, that “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Yes, a sinful tongue is full of deadly poison—it spits out naughty words just as a rattlesnake spits out venom. Who can tell the damage that has been done by such a tongue? who can tell how many people have died from its bites? What thefts, what oaths, what lies, what scandals, what tears, what anguish of soul it is answerable for! Then, too, how frequently it is used to teach error.

Just think of it; there are men now alive whose tongues are trying to persuade people that there is no God, and that the Bible is not true, and that they may spend Sunday as they please. And, oh! what a revelation there will be at the Day of Judgement of all its secret crimes—its words of darkness. Some one says, "If ungodly men were struck dumb, in a moment half the wickedness in the world would be stopped. If everybody resolved to speak only what he ought to speak, what a change would come over the world!"

Ah! dear children, upon how many stones in the churchyard might be written the inscription, "Here lies a broken heart,—broken by a false tongue!" Well might the Saviour "sigh deeply" in Himself as he cried "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened," and restored the gift of speech to a poor mute—He was thinking how few make a proper use of that gift.

But, sadder still, St. James tells us that it is "set on fire of hell."

What a dreadful idea! But so it is. When people "grow old in sin,"—when Satan has filled them with malice and falsehood and blasphemy, their tongues may be said to be set on fire of hell. They are so desperate! You will read of such people when you grow up. God grant that you may never meet with them! And let it be a warning to us, that we shun him who brings people into that awful state; for if our tongues are set on fire of hell now, assuredly both "body and soul" will burn in it when we die.

And now you understand the text, "The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things."

And have you thought, dear children, that each of you has one of these little members fixed in your mouth? There it is all ready and waiting for orders from morning to night. It is silent now, I daresay it is glad of a few minutes' rest—it would be well if it got more. It is because we let our tongues rattle so fast, that they get to talk such nonsense. Quaker fathers and mothers teach their boys and girls to sit for hours without speaking a word; and, depend upon it, they are all the happier for it—far happier than boys or girls who chatter, chatter, chatter, till people's ears ache, and they wish them at Jericho!

You have a tongue then—it is God's gift to you, and "There is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." God is watching to see what use you make of it.

You may use it properly or improperly.

You use it improperly when you let it tell a lie. "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord"—He hates, He abhors them. "Without" (that is, shut out of heaven, St. John saw) "murderers, idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." David sentences the "false tongue" to "hot burning coals." And if you could look into the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," we should see all "liars" there! Is it any wonder, then, that good people cannot love story-tellers?—is it any wonder they implore you to speak the truth always?

Again, you use your tongue improperly when you let it utter wicked words. Boys soon pick up bad language in the street, or at school; and, strange to say, it is thought manly to use it. But what does the Bible say? "Filthiness, foolish talking, jesting, let them not be once named amongst you." "Let your yea be yea, and your nay nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can a fig tree bear olive berries, or a vine figs?" Yet boys will employ one and the same tongue to pray "Hallowed be thy name," and to take that holy name in vain. They will be repeating Scripture in class-room, and pouring out corruption in the playground. Dear children, "these things ought not so to be."

You use your tongue improperly when it scolds others.

If you must reprove, it should be done gently, otherwise it will do harm instead of good. A tongue which is tipped with passionate expression—a tongue which is always ready to discharge harsh cross irritating words, just like a barrel of gunpowder in a blacksmith's shop, everybody dreads it and keeps at a distance.

But you ask, "Can I prevent my tongue from doing such things?"

Most certainly you can. Other children do. You yourself have often stopped it when it was on the point of saying something which you thought better of. It only requires care and the help of the Holy Spirit. Pray God to "set a watch before your mouth, and keep the door of your lips." Remember that it is under lock and

key; you can fasten it up with no less than four gates—there are the two teeth-armed jaws, and the two firm lips—if it forces the inner pair, it may be stopped by the outer pair. And then over and above this your mind has authority over it—it must do its bidding.

But now for some of the proper uses of this little member.

You use it properly when you use it in pleasant and profitable conversation.

“There is a time for speaking,” dear children. We do not want to put your tongues in strait-waistcoats; we like to hear your thoughts and feelings; we are delighted to hear you inquiring about the use of this thing, and the meaning of that. This is drawing water from the wells of knowledge. To me, to listen to what a child has to say after a visit to the Zoological Gardens, or a missionary meeting, is as pleasant as to listen to a chime of Christmas bells. Solomon says, that “a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” He also says, however, that “in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.” We are to be “swift to hear, and slow to speak;” we have two eyes, two ears, two hands, two feet but only one tongue—is not that a hint to us?

You use your tongue properly when you use it to sing the praises of God.

“The pipe and the psaltery make sweet melody, but a pleasant tongue is above them both.” And if it is so to us, how much more to God!—how very sweet a “pleasant tongue” must be to Him! Therefore David calls his tongue his “glory,”—“the best instrument that he has.” And who has such a claim to the service of our tongues as he who made them? Dear children, you should sing God’s praises everywhere; not in church only, but when you are dressing in the morning, when you are working in the garden, when you are walking in the fields, when you sit down to the piano. Let him see that you can shout Hosanna as well as the children in the temple. Your little canary birds are warbling their praises all day long, and will you be behind them?—you for whom Jesus died?

You use your tongue properly when you use it to comfort and instruct others.

How many around you need comfort and instruction! There are the poor, the afflicted, the bereaved; how much they value a few

kind words even from a child. Your parents are often in trouble,—could you not whisper one of our Father's gracious promises in their ear? Is there no servant in your house whom you might teach to read? Are there no aged or blind people around you to whom you might be "eyes?" And when you get to be older, will you not offer yourselves for a class in the Ragged-school or the Sunday-school.

These are some of the proper uses of the "little member."

Dear children, are you using yours properly or improperly? is it busy for God or for Satan? is it doing harm, or is it doing good?

These are serious questions. You must not put them aside. You must answer them seriously. O consider what we have been talking about; treasure it up in your heart! And whilst every body's tongue can boast of the great things which it can do, let the boast of your tongue be that it has "Holiness unto the Lord" engraven upon it.

"THY BELOVED."

THOUGH thine eyes have never seen thy Lord, yet thou hast heard His voice, received His benefits, and lived in His bosom. He taught thee to know thyself and Him; He opened thee that first window through which thou sawest into heaven. Hast thou forgotten since thy heart was careless, and He awakened it; hard, and He softened it; stubborn, and He made it yield; at peace, and He troubled it; whole, and He broke it; and broken till He healed it again? Hast thou forgotten the times when He found thee in tears; when He heard thy secret sighs and groans, and left all to come and comfort thee; when He took thee, as it were, in His arms, and asked thee, "Poor soul, what ails thee? Dost thou weep when I have wept so much? Be of good cheer; thy wounds are saving, and not deadly; it is I have made them, who mean thee no hurt: though I let out thy blood I will not let out thy life." I remember His voice. How gently did He take me up! How carefully did He dress my wounds! Methinks I hear Him still saying to me, "Poor sinner, though thou hast dealt unkindly with Me, and cast Me off, yet I will not do so by thee. Though set light by Me, and all My mercies, yet they and Myself are all thine. What would thou have that I can give thee? And what dost thou want that I cannot give thee? If anything I

have will give thee pleasure, thou shalt have it. Wouldst thou have pardon?—I freely forgive thee all the debt. Wouldst thou have grace and peace?—Thou shalt have them both. Wouldst thou have Myself?—Behold I am thine, thy Friend, thy Lord, thy Brother, Husband, and Head. Wouldst thou have the Father?—I will bring thee to Him, and thou shalt have Him, in and by Me.” These were my Lord’s reviving words. After all, when I was doubtful of His love, methinks I yet remember His overcoming arguments: “Have I done so much, sinner, to testify My love, and yet dost thou doubt? Have I offered thee Myself and love so long, and yet dost thou question My willingness to be thine? At what dearer rate should I tell thee that I love thee? Have I made Myself in the Gospel a lion to thine enemies, and a lamb to thee, and dost thou overlook My lamb-like nature? Had I been willing to let thee perish, what need I have done and suffered so much? What need I follow thee with such patience and importunity? Why dost thou tell Me of thy wants; have I not enough for Me and thee? Or of thy unworthiness; for if thou wast thyself worthy, what shouldst thou do with My worthiness? Did I ever invite or save the worthy and the righteous or is there any such upon earth? Hast thou nothing; art thou lost and miserable, helpless and forlorn? Dost thou believe I am an all-sufficient Saviour, and wouldst thou have Me? Lo, I am thine, take Me; if thou art willing, I am; and neither sin nor Satan shall break the match.” These, O these, were the blessed words which His Spirit from His Gospel spoke unto me, till He made me cast myself at His feet and cry out, “My Saviour, and my Lord, Thou hast broken, Thou hast revived my heart; Thou hast overcome, Thou hast won my heart; take it, it is Thine; if such a heart can please Thee, take it; if it cannot, make it such as Thou wouldst have it. Thus, O my soul, mayest thou remember the sweet familiarity thou hast had with Christ; therefore, if acquaintance will cause affection, let out thy heart unto Him. It is He that hath stood by thy bed of sickness, hath eased thy pains, refreshed thy weariness, and removed thy fears. He hath been always ready, when thou hast earnestly sought Him; hath met thee in public and in private; hath been found of thee in the congregation, in thy house, in thy closet, in the field, in thy waking nights, in thy deepest dangers.—*Richard Baxter.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE EFFECTS OF PIETY ON A NATION.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY EVENING, OCT. 6, 1857,
BY THE REV. W. M. PUNSHON,
AT THE CITY ROAD CHAPEL.

"And he said, Oh! let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake."—GENESIS xviii. 32.

MOST remarkable and most encouraging is this instance of prevailing prayer. It might well stimulate us to the exercise of sublimer faith, when we behold a mortal thus wrestling with Omnipotence—wrestling with such holy boldness, that justice suspends its inflictions, and cannot seal the sinner's doom. Passing over that, however, with all the doctrines it involves, there is another thought couched in the text, to which, at the present time, I want to direct your attention. The history of nations must be regarded, by every enlightened mind, as the history of the providence of God. It is not enough, if we would study history aright, that we follow in the track of battles, that we listen to the wail of the vanquished and to the shout of the conquerors; it is not enough that we excite in ourselves a sort of hero worship of the world's foster-gods, the stalwart and noble peerage of mankind; it is not enough that we trace upon the page of history, the subtle and intricate developments of human character; to study history aright, we must find God in it, we must always recognize the ever present and the ever acting Divinity, working all things according to the counsel of his benevolent and holy will. This is the prominent aspect in which history ought to be studied, or grievous dishonour is done to the Universal Ruler, and intense injury is inflicted upon the spirits of men. God himself, you remember, has impressively announced the guilt and danger of those who regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hands. The history of ancient Israel, for instance, the chosen people, led by the pillar of cloud by day, and by the pillar of fire by night, through the marchings of that perilous wilderness, what was it but the successful development, in a series of wondrous deliverances, of the ever active providence of God? There were some things in that history which, of course, were incapable either of transfer or of repetition; but the history itself included, and was ordained to set forth, certain prominent principles for the recognition of all nations; principles which were intended to assert the rights of God, and to assert the obligations of his creatures; principles which are to be consummated in their evolution, amid the solemnities of the last day. It was so in the case of Sodom, punished as an example to God's chosen people. Their transgressions had become obduracy, their obduracy had blossomed out into punishment. But a chance in the divine government yet remained to them; peradventure there might have been ten righteous in the city. If there had been ten righteous in the city,

those pious men would have been the substance, the essence, the strength of the devoted nation; for them, on their account, for their sakes, the utter ruin of the land might have been averted, and through them, after the divine displeasure had passed by, there might have sprung up renewed strength and recovered glory. We may fairly, I think, take this as a general principle, that pious men, in all ages of the world's history, are the true strength of the nations in which, in God's providence, they are privileged to live; oftentimes averting calamity, oftentimes restoring strength and blessing when, but for them, it would have lapsed and gone for ever. This is the principle which I purpose, God helping me, to apply for a moment to our own times, and to the land in which we live; and in order to give the subject a great deal of a practical character, I will, in the first place, paint the pious men, and then show the effect which the consistent maintenance of a course of piety may be expected to insure.

I. In the first place, who are the pious men? Who are they whom God, who never judges in short-sightedness, who sees the end from the beginning, and who cannot possibly be deceived or mistaken in his estimate of human character, who are they whom God designates, "The holy seed that shall be the substance thereof"—the pious men that are the strength of the nations in which they live? In order to sustain the honourable appellation which is thus assigned, men must cultivate habits of thought and of practice, that are appropriate to such a character. I will just mention two or three particulars.

In the first place, they are pious men who separate themselves avowedly and at the utmost possible distance from surrounding wickedness. Men are placed under the influence of religion, in order that they may separate from sin—in order that they may be governed by habits of righteousness and true holiness. In times when depravity is especially flagrant there is a special obligation upon pious men to bring out their virtues into braver and more prominent exercise, regarding that surrounding depravity as in no wise a reason for flinching, or for cowardice, or for compromise, but rather for the augmented firmness of their purity. Now, it cannot for one moment be doubted that in the times in which we live iniquity does most flagrantly abound. There is not a sin which does not exist—and exist in all rankness and impurity. Because of swearing the land mourns. God's sabbaths are systematically desecrated, his sanctuaries contumeliously forsaken, his ordinances trampled under foot, his ministers met with the leer oftentimes due to detected conspirators, and regarded as banded traitors who have conspired against the liberties of the world. The lusts of the flesh scarcely affect to conceal their filthiness, everywhere unveiling their forms, and everywhere diffusing their pestilence. We do not venture upon any sort of comparison—we do not venture to compare the aggregate depravity of this age with the depravity of any age that has preceded. We do but affirm the general fact, that the heart of man is "deceitful and desperately wicked," and that the depravity we see around us, the exhibition of the carnal mind, "which is enmity against God," is most fearfully aggravated by the abundance of privilege by which the people are surrounded. Now, it is the duty I repeat, of those who would have God's estimate of them as pious men, that they should regard this depravity as invoking them to bear the testimony of unsullied and spotless holiness. Let the exhortations on this matter which are scattered throughout the pages of the Bible be solemnly pondered. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." "Abstain from the appearance of evil." In times when depravity is especially flagrant do not even borrow of the garments of falsehood; do not let there be any meretricious semblance of that which is hateful in the sight of God. Abstain from the appearance of evil. Come out of it so thoroughly that the fellowships and intercourses of social life do not

seduce you into a sort of complicity. "Be not partakers of other men's sins. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove." "Be ye not unequally yoked together to unbelievers, for what fellowship hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial, and what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" "Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; perfect in holiness in the fear of God." You will not fail to perceive that the whole of these passages have one aim and one summons, and that is holiness—holiness, as spotless in the secrecy of individual consciousness as in the jealous watch of men—holiness shrined in the heart and influencing benignly and transformingly the entire character—holiness, that is, something more chivalrous than national honor—holiness, something that maintains a higher standard of right than commercial integrity—holiness, something that is more noble-minded than the conventional courtesies of life—holiness which comes out in every-day existence, hallowing each transaction, taking hold of the money as it passes through the hand in ordinary currency, and stamping upon it a more noble image and superscription than Cæsar's—holiness written upon the bells of the horses and upon the frontlet of the forehead, an immaculate and spotless lustre exuding, so to speak, from the man in daily life, so that the world starts back from him, and tells at a glance that he has been with Jesus. Now, brethren, it is to this, to the exercise and maintenance of this unflinching holiness that you are called. Here is the first prominent obligation of pious men. You are to confront every evil with its exact and diametrical opposite; and he who in circumstances like these in which we stand ventures to hesitate, or ventures to parley, brand him as a traitor to his country, a traitor to his religion, and a traitor to his God.

Secondly, if you would be what God regards as pious men, you must cultivate firm attachment to the doctrines of Christian truth. There is, brethren, in our day a very widely diffused defectiveness of religious profession, a very widely diffused departure from the faith that was "once delivered to the saints." This is a Christian country. Men call it so, I know, but there is in daily practice a strange and sad departure from the precepts of Christianity—ay, on the part of men by whom the theory of this being a Christian country is most noisily and boisterously maintained. Are you strangers to the presence in the midst of us of the dark and subtle spirit of unbelief—a venal press and active emissaries poisoning the fresh blood of youth, disheartening the last hope of age, and which, if their own account of the circulation of their pernicious principles is to be relied upon, has already tainted hundreds of thousands with that infectious venom whose poison lies not in the destruction of the body? True, it is for the most part bland, conciliatory, plausible, rather than audacious and braggart, as in former times, veiling its deadly purpose in song or in story. But the dagger is not the less deadly because the haft is jewelled, and infidelity is not the less infidelity, not the less pernicious, not the less accursed, because genius has woven its stories to adorn it, and because fancy has wreathed it into song. Are you strangers to the avowed denial, on the part of some, of the divinity and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ—to the man-exalting opinion which relies for its own salvation upon the piled-up fabric of its own righteousness, or which, through the flinty rocks of self-righteous morality, would tunnel out a passage to the eternal throne? Are you strangers to the workings of the grand apostacy darkening the sunlight of the Saviour's love, dialocating the perfection of the Saviour's work, hampering the course of the atonement with the frail entangled framework of human merit, restless in its endeavours to regain its ascendancy—crafty, and vigilant, and formidable as ever? Are you strangers to the heresy which has made its appearance in the midst of a body once deeming itself the fairest offspring of the Reformation, and which would exclude thousands from covenanted mercies, because they own not priestly pretensions, and

conform not to traditional rites? Are you strangers in the other quarter of the horizon and of the sky to dark and lowering portents that have come over with rationalistic and German infidelity? Brethren, there is a duty, solemn and authoritative, resting upon the pious men that they hold fast that which was "once delivered to the saints." Let the exhortations, too, on this matter, be carefully pondered. "Be no more children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of man and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to betray." "Stand fast"—not loose, not easily shifted, not having a firm foundation—"stand fast in the faith once delivered unto the saints." "Be rooted in the faith;" be "grounded in the faith;" "contend earnestly for the faith." Brethren, here is another invocation, and it is solemnly binding upon you. And while there are some around us that would rob Christ of his grace, and others that would rob Christ of his crown, and others, more royal felons, that would steal both the one and the other, let it be ours to take our stand firm and unswerving by the altars of the truth; let our determination go forth to the universe—"I determine to know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

And then, thirdly, if you would be pious men, as God estimates piety, you must cultivate cordial, brotherly love. In times like these there is a solemn obligation resting upon all "who hold the head," to cultivate the spirit of unity with all "who hold the head." By unity, we do not mean uniformity. There is none; there can be none in the free universe of God. You have it not in nature. You may go out into the waving woodland, when death is on the trees, and you may prune their riotous growth, and mould, and shape, and cut them into something like a decent, a decorous uniformity; but the returning spring, when it comes, will laugh at your aimless labor. Wherever there is life there will be found variety of engaging forms which attract and fascinate the eye. We do not mean uniformity, therefore; the harmony of voices, or the adjustment of actions, the drowsy repetition of one belief, or the harmonious intonation of one liturgy; but we mean "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," which we are to intensely labor to maintain and procure. Let the exhortations on this matter also be very solemnly pondered. "A new commandment"—so that there are eleven commandments now; the decalogue has been added to by this new commandment, which is, indeed, the substance and essence of all the rest—"A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." "Be kindly affectioned one to another, in brotherly love, in honour preferring one another." Nay, the apostle does not hesitate to set it down as one of the surest evidences of Christian discipleship—"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Compliance with these exhortations, is always imperative, especially imperative in seasons of national danger. Everything that is ominous, everything that is solemn, everything that is portentous around us, must be regarded as an earnest call to Christians to live together in love. This love is to be cherished everywhere, to be cherished towards those who are members of the same section of the universal church. Here, of course, there should be no orphan's heart. Here, all should feel themselves members of a commonwealth. There should be a rejoicing with those that do rejoice, and a weeping with those that weep; and, as by electric fire, the wants and the wishes of the one should be communicated to and acknowledged by the whole. But it should not only be cherished in our own communion, but towards all who hold "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." Wherever Christ is acknowledged, his grace magnified, his crown vindicated, his law made honourable, wherever the service of Christ is the aim, and the glory of Christ is the purpose, there the church should know as Christian, and should hail as brethren. This duty is one that has been scandalously neglected in the times in which we live; and that neglect has darkened the aspect and augmented the

perils of the times. Brethren, we must all amend if we would not betray. And when the church of Christ shall combine in heart as in spirit one, then shall the great building of the universe progress. God shall smile upon the workmen, "the glory of the latter house shall exceed the glory of the former," and the whole "building fitly framed together shall grow up into a holy temple of the Lord."

Then, fourthly, if we would be pious men as God estimates piety, we must be zealous in endeavour for the spread of the gospel, and for the conversion of the world. The errors and the crimes of which we have spoken render this essential. We have but to gather into our minds the contemplation of guilt so heinous, so offensive that it rises up in the presence of the Holy One, and calls for vengeance as he is seated upon his throne; then we have but to remember the consequences of that guilt everywhere producing misery, everywhere drying up the sources of spiritual influence, everywhere exposing to the unending perditions of hell. Now, brethren, nothing—and I would speak as one member of the army summoning others to the battle-field—nothing will avail but the combined, and devoted, and persevering exertions of the members of the church below. How else shall we attempt to grasp with the depravity around us? Parliamentary enactments—what can they do? Threats to affright, or bribes to seduce, what can they do? Patronage in all its prestige and all its power, all that can be possibly brought out of state treasury or of state influence—what are they? Availless utterly without the power and Spirit of God. No; there must be a band of faithful men who are thus renovated and redeemed going forth in the name of the Lord. They must sustain the ministry in existing pastorates, and spread it wherever it has never been established. They must support institutions for the education of the entire man, institutions based upon the word of God. They must become themselves preachers of the "truth as it is in Jesus;" by prayer, by influence, by example, by effort, they must display all the grace which has redeemed them; and especially they must all, in earnest, repeated, importunate supplications besiege the throne of grace in prayer. This is another summons, the last I shall give you on this matter to-night, and you are now to answer it with intense energy, with intense zeal. Coldness here is irrational. Ardour here is reason. Indifference here is foolishness. Earnestness, or if you will, enthusiasm here is the highest and sublimest wisdom.

If you would be pious men, therefore, as God estimates piety, you are to come out from the world and to be separated from it; you are to hold fast the doctrines you have received; you are to cultivate to each other the tenderest brotherly love; and you are to be energetic in heart for the conversion of the world.

II. I come now, secondly and briefly, to notice the effects which we are warranted in expecting such conduct as this to ensure. This is the doctrine of the text, that Sodom would have been spared if the ten righteous men had been there. Pious men are presented to us, therefore, as the safety of the nation in which they live. This is very beautifully presented in several other parts of Scripture. You have it for instance in the prophecy of Isaiah, lxxv. 8, 9:—"Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there." Then, again in the prophecy of Malachi, iii. 10, 11:—"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." We see here the development of the general principle for which we contend, that God preserves nations for the sake

of pious men. The annals of the past show how very frequently he has put to nought statemanship, fleets, and armies, and has rendered honour to truth, meekness, and righteousness. This I do solemnly believe to be the case in our own land in this crisis of its affairs, and I am bold to affirm my conviction, that the destinies of England and of the British Empire are at this moment in the hands of its pious men. If they be faithful to their high trust and to the vocation to which they are eminently and signally called, nothing can harm us: no weapon that is formed against us shall ever be able to prosper. I think this might be made out from the history of the past both as to temporal and spiritual matters. I appeal to you whether it is not manifest that the temporal interests of a nation are bound up in its piety? Let pious men prevail in a land, let the population become imbued with the spirit and with the leaven of evangelical godliness, what is the consequence? Order is at once preserved. As their holiness spreads, as their unworldly yet earnest example manifests itself and begins to be felt, sounder views prevail. The moral is felt to exert a supremacy over the secular; the political agitator, the infidel demagogue, the philosophic theorist are scouted as physicians of no value; and men everywhere learn to submit to the orderly restraints and the well-regulated government of law. Let pious men prevail, and they will keep up the freedom of a land. I do not mean that crouching emasculation on the one hand, nor that ribald licentiousness on the other hand, which have both been dignified by the name by extreme political parties; but I mean well-ordered and rational liberty—liberty which respects the rights of other people at the same time that it asserts and vindicates its own—liberty which with one hand renders to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and with the other hand takes care to render to God the things that are God's—liberty which honors men as men, just because the Divine command tells it to "honour all men," and because, all the world over there is nothing so royal as a man. That liberty will be preserved wherever pious men are found, and wherever the example of these pious men begins to spread itself amongst people.

And, then, pious men will preserve the prosperity of a land. There is a false prosperity which must be abandoned; there is false honor which must be speedily forsworn; but that prosperity which is substantial and abiding will remain under the influences of piety. Art will minister then not to luxury but to truth; science will minister then not to infidelity but to truth; commerce will minister then not to selfishness but to benevolence; and other realms shall render to us their unbought and unpurchaseable homage, and the sons of our country, in their not unholy pride, may wave their banner to the wind, with the motto on it—

"He is the free man whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves besides."

Yes, brethren, it is Britain's altar and not Britain's throne, Britain's Bible and not Britain's statute book, that is the great, and deep, and strong source of her national prosperity and renown. Do away with this, suffer that fidelity with which, in some humble measure, we have borne witness for God, to be relaxed, let our Sabbaths be sinned away at the bidding of unholy or mistaken mobs; let us enter into adulterous and unworthy alliance with the man of sin; let us be traitors to the trust with which God has invested us, to take care of the ark of the Lord, and the crown will lose its lustre, the peerage its nobility and the senate its command; all the phases of social rank and order will be disjointed and disorganized; a lava tide of desolation will overwhelm all that is consecrated and noble, and angels may sing the dirge over a once great, but now hopelessly fallen people, "the glory is departed from Israel because the ark of God is taken." Keep fast by that ark, hold it; hold your attachment to it as the strongest element of being, and there shall be no bounds to the sacred magnificence of our nation, but the fires of the last day, when they consume

all that is perishable and drossy, may see us with the light of the Divine presence gleaming harmlessly around our brow, and in our hand the open law for all the nations of mankind.

Those are temporal benefits. And then, let there be pious men in the land, and spiritual benefits will also be secured. There will for instance, be the defeat of erroneous opinions. Truth when the spirit inspires it not, abstract truth, is weak and powerless. Truth, with the spirit in it is mighty, and will prevail. There can be no fear as to the result, because the world had never been left, and will never be left without the active spirit of God. Falsehood breaks out impetuously, just like one of those torrents that leap and rattle over the summit of the mountain after the thunder storm, overwhelming in the first outbreak, but dying away into insignificance and silence by and by; truth is the little spring that rises up imperceptibly and gently, and flows on unostentatious and noiseless until at last navies are wafted on its bosom, and it pours its full volume of triumphant waters into the rejoicing sea. So it will be with truth; wealth cannot bribe it, talent cannot dazzle it, sophistry cannot overreach it, authority cannot please it—they all, like Felix, tremble in its majestic presence. Let pious men increase, and each one of them will become a centre of holiness; apostates will be brought back to the church, poor backsliders will be reclaimed into new-found liberty and new-created privilege, and there will be a cry like that on the summit of Carmel after the controversy was over, and had issued in the discomfiture of Baal—"The Lord, he is God; the Lord he is God."

And, then, better than all that, salvation of souls will be secured. The conversion of a soul is an infinitely greater triumph than the eradication of a false opinion. A false opinion may be crushed, and the man that holds it may be in imminent spiritual peril; convert the man's soul, and his opinions will come right by and by. Oh, if as you go from this place to-night, you were to behold the crowds of tempters and temptresses to evil that will cross your path as you travel homeward if you think of their activity, of their earnestness to proselytize in the grand diabolical army, and to make sevenfold more the children of hell than they are themselves, and if you think of the apathy of the faithful, of the scantiness of effort, of the failure of faith, of the depression of endeavour, of the laxity of attachment on the part of believers in Jesus, surely there is enough to make you abashed and confounded. Brethren, I should like, if I could, to bring before you one solitary soul, to fasten your attention upon that soul, to transfix it as with a lightning glance before you, so that you might trace it in its downward path, see it as habit crusts it over, and selfishness rejoices over it, and the foul fiend gloats upon it in mockery, and disease prematurely induced comes upon it, and death waits for his prey, and hell is moved from beneath to meet it at its coming, and that you should follow it down into those dark and dread abodes, which man's pencil painteth not, and of which man's imagination, thank God, cannot conceive! Oh! draw the curtain over that; we cannot bear the sight! But as you think of the real spiritual peril in which not one—not a family—oh! if there were but a family, all London would be awake for its deliverance, but there is a world in danger—not one, not a family, not an island, not a continent, but a world—if I could only fasten that upon your consciences to-night, each one of you would surely go away with tearful eye and glad heart, glad that you were able to do anything for God, and would not rest without saying, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as the brightness, and the salvation thereof as the lamp that burneth."

Just one parting word. If you would do all this, you must be pious yourselves; but do not be amongst the number of those who busy themselves in the externalisms

of godliness, and are in some measure active in connection with the church of God, but are out of Christ, aliens themselves from the commonwealth of Israel. If you are not personally pious, you will be accomplices in drawing down the thunderbolt and chargeable to that extent with your country's ruin, and the ruin of souls. Come to Christ now; let all your past iniquity be forgotten and forgiven as you bow before him in humiliation and in tears; he will not refuse you; he will not cast you out. Then enter upon a life of piety in spite of all that scoffers say. Ah! religion is not so mean a thing as infidels represent it to be! They curl the lip of scorn at us, and we can bear that; they flash the eye of hate at us, and we can bear that, as long as God looks upon us with complacency, as long as he has promised to crown us as conquerors in heaven, for which, by our spiritual conflicts and victories, we shall have come prepared. Oh, it is no mean thing. The saint, the righteous man, the pious believer in Jesus, is a patriot as well as a saint. The worldling may sneer and scorn, but we have a noble revenge, for it is pious men that have kept the conflagrating elements away from this long-doomed world up to the present moment of its history; and if the ten righteous had not been in this enormous Sodom, long ere now would the fire-brand of destruction have struck it that it might be consumed in its deserved ruin. Thank God, there is hope for the world yet. When the prophet, in depression and in sorrow was saying, "I, even I only am left, the prophet of the Lord," God pointed him to seven thousand that had never bowed the knee to Baal; and there are faithful ones in the secret places of the world yet—palm-tree-Christians growing up in unexpected places amid sandy soil, and with no companionship, who are flourishing in godly vigour and earnest in persevering prayer. There is hope for the world yet. Oh, for the increase of these pious men! Be you of the number of this unostentatious but valiant host. Do you pant for fame! You can find it here. Young men, there are some of you in the presence of God that have ambition high bounding in your hearts, who feel the elasticity of youth within you, who feel that the flight of your soaring spirit is not the flight of the flagging or the breathless; that there is something still within you that pants for a distinction other than you have yet attained—oh, come to Christ, enlist yourselves in his service, be soldiers of the cross, fight moral battles, and yours shall be the victory. To you the church is looking; your fathers, worn out with labour, exhausted with the vicissitudes and the victories of years, are passing rapidly away, and they are wondering where their successors are. They have gone from us; just when we were expecting for them higher fields and wider triumphs; the fiery chariot came and they were not, and nothing was left for us but to cry as we followed the track of the cavalcade, in our hopelessness, almost in our agony—"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." Oh! thank God, they have flung their mantles down, and it is for you to catch them, to robe yourselves to-day in the garments of the holy departed, and like them, to do and die.

The following Nos. of "The Penny Pulpit" contain Sermons by the Rev. W. M. PUNSHON:—
No. 2,874—6, 2,966, 3,092, 3,097, 3,103, 3,222, 3,224, 3,232.

Sketches and Essays.

NEVER DESPAIR.

[From *Stories for Sunday Scholars.*]

IN a small room, very poorly furnished, and yet so clean and tidy that it looked comfortable, sat a very old woman and a little boy. The old woman was darning a stocking, and the boy was sewing pieces of patchwork together to form a quilt. He had a pale, sad face, black hair, and bushy eyebrows, small thin hands, and legs so weak that they seemed unfit to carry the little body to which they belonged. The old woman was telling him a story, to which he eagerly listened, saying, every time she stopped, "Go on, please, dear grandmother." This little boy's name was John Kitto. He had a father and mother, and many sisters and brothers, but he liked best to live with his grandmother, for he was often ill, and loved quiet. His father, I am sorry to say, was a drunkard, who spent his money in drink as fast as he got it, while his wife and children were left to starve. What a miserable home was theirs! When John went there it made his heart ache to see his poor mother so sad and weak, and his brothers and sisters wanting food, and so he was always glad to get back to grandmother's comfortable room. When John was twelve years old his grandmother fell ill, and, having no means of support, she was obliged to go and live with John's mother, who was her daughter. What a change was this for poor John! He had learned to read, and he loved reading more than I can tell you. Whatever money he had was spent in buying books. Once he wrote a book, and even drew pictures for it, and sold it to his cousin for a penny. But John was now old enough to learn a trade, and to earn a little money for himself, so he was placed with a barber, with whom he remained until he was sixteen years old, and then he came home again. His father was a mason, so the next thing John did was to put on a smock-frock, and

The Mother's Magazine. July, 1860.

go and help him ; but as he was too weakly to do much work, he passed much time in his own room. Yes, John had a room all to himself—a little cupboard-like place, quite at the top of the house, with scarcely room to stand upright in it. It had a slanting roof, and a hole which served for a window and a chimney, and which let in the rain as well as the air. The walls of this room were hung round with such pictures as John had been able to paint or buy. There was a bed in it, which also served for a seat, as he had no chair, and there was a table and a chest filled with pebbles and shells, and other odd matters which he had collected. He had a good many books, and amongst them an old Bible, which he often read. John was happy enough in his way, and always glad to get a quiet time for reading or thinking in his own room ; but about this time he met with a sad accident. One day he was helping his father, who was at work on the roof of a house, and John was employed in carrying up slates to him. It was a heavy load for such a weak boy ; but he managed to totter up to the top of the ladder, when, suddenly turning giddy, he fell to the ground. There he lay, bleeding from the nose and mouth and ears, and quite senseless, for he was much hurt, and did not recover his senses for a fortnight. At length he awoke, as if from sleep, and could not make out what was the matter with him. He tried to rise in bed, but fell back ; then he looked round the room and saw several people talking one to another, but he could not hear a word they said. He spoke to them, and saw their lips move in reply ; but he could hear nothing. “ Why do you not answer me ? ” he cried. “ Speak, speak.”

Then some one took a slate and wrote upon it, “ You are deaf.”

Poor boy ! can you fancy what he felt when he knew this ; how he turned his head on the pillow and wept long and bitterly.

And so day after day passed, and John grew paler and thinner and more miserable-looking than ever. When able to get out he used to collect the pieces of iron and rope, or anything else worth picking up from the black mud, when the tide was out, for John lived in a seaport town. But he gained very little by this ; and one day he hurt his foot very badly by treading on a broken glass-bottle, and was obliged to give it up altogether.

What was the poor boy to do ? He could not tell, and yet he must try and earn money in some way. He had but twopence in the

whole world, and this he spent in buying paper, and then he painted flowers and faces, and birds and trees, and very queer things they were; but people bought them, for they liked to encourage a lad who tried to earn an honest penny. At last this, too, failed, and there seemed nothing left for poor John to do but starve. Now all this time he had a source of happiness that no one could take from him. Before his accident he read his Bible very often, because it *amused* him; but after his accident he loved to read it because he found *comfort* in it. He read it with prayer, asking God to enable him to understand it; and thus he learned to feel that he had a Friend and a Father in the Great God—and what a blessed thought was this! The next thing that happened to John was his removal to the workhouse, and this was a change for the best for him, since he was well fed and clothed, and taught to make list-shoes. He still continued to read every book that came in his way, and to make the most of every opportunity of improving himself.

He used to write down from day to day all that happened to him, but I have not room to tell you what he wrote. The poor lad suffered much; but he was kindly treated, and improved rapidly, while his good conduct made him much liked by the master of the workhouse, who soon took a great interest in him. He also seems to have gone on steadily in the way of holiness, seeking God with his whole heart; and you know the promise—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." So it was with John, God was his Friend, and so He raised up other friends for him. One after another many persons became interested in the poor lad, and showed him kindness; and after he had been four years in the workhouse a gentleman at Exeter took him to live with him. Then John had many Christian privileges, and he profited by them, and at length it became the one desire of his heart to be a missionary, and to devote his life to the service of God.

Not long after this he was engaged by the Church Mission to go to Malta, and here he remained for some time. We then read of his going to the East, and his living at Bagdad as a tutor to Mr. Groves's little boys. Mr Groves was the gentleman who took John Kitto to live with him in Exeter. While living at Bagdad, John was gaining knowledge every day. With his slate in his hand he asked questions of all whom he met, and thus learned the manners

and customs of the East, which he treasured up for future use. At length he returned to England and married. He had several children, and it was a great source of grief to him that he could not hear what they said. He used to say to his wife when their first child began to speak, "Look, is she speaking, or does she only make a noise?—tell me what kind of a sound it is."

It was wonderful how soon his children learned to understand him, and talk with their fingers, and how they loved their poor deaf father.

All this time he went on writing books, and very clever books they were, and brought him great honour; but the great work of his life was "The Pictorial Bible"—a Bible full of pictures, showing how the present manners and customs of Eastern life explained those mentioned in the Scriptures. John Kitto was now made Dr. Kitto. He had become a great as well as a good and clever man. He continued writing books until the day of his death, which was very sudden; but he was fully prepared for the great change.

Will my little readers try and profit by the lessons which the life of Dr. Kitto teaches. As a child, he was always weak and often ill, but never idle. The first we hear of him is that he could sew well, and employed his time in making a patchwork quilt for his grandmother. Then we find him poor, wretched, and half-starved in his miserable home, and perfectly deaf from the effects of his accident; but still industrious, and anxious to gain knowledge wherever it could be found. As a barber's apprentice, a mason's labourer, a collector of rubbish left by the tide in the black mud, and as an inmate of the workhouse, we find the same contented, cheerful, and industrious spirit. God helped him because he tried to help himself. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things," namely, every needful good, "shall be added to you."

"Through all the changing scenes of
In trouble and in joy, [life,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ.

"Of his deliverance I will boast
Till all that are distress,
From my example comfort take,
And lull their griefs to rest.

"Oh magnify the Lord with me,
With me exalt his name;
When in distress to Him I called,
He to my rescue came.

"Oh, make but trial of His love,
Experience will decide;
How bless'd are they, and only they,
Who in His truth confide."

PRESENT SALVATION.

Present Salvation; not this final glory of the redeemed. That is not for thee to-day. Thou must wait till the Lord comes, and they that sleep in Christ shall rise, and the living shall be changed. Then, and only then, shall the crowning joys tell thee all that salvation means.

But salvation is for you now. You may not rest in the haven, or career on the shore; but, at least, you may be delivered from the yawning gulph, and placed in the ship with Christ. Salvation from sin, pardon for the past, grace for the present, I do now proclaim unto thee, even to thee. As David was forgiven, so shalt thou be. As Paul "obtained mercy," so shalt thou. As the publican went down to his house justified, so shalt thou. As the early Christians "rejoiced in hope of the glory of God," so shalt thou. As the thief on the cross went to be with Christ in paradise, so shalt thou, unless thou neglect so great salvation.

It is at thy door. All things are now ready. Thou hast nothing to pay, nowhere to go, no one to find, nothing to invent or imagine. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Lift up your heart, lift up your voice. Call upon the Lord, and say, "Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities." Do it just as you are, just where you are; for a fitter spot or a better time, or a more worthy condition, you will never see. Now is the accepted time! Now is the day of salvation!

When is now? In matters of salvation it seems to be always next year. But no! no! Now is not the next year, nor the next month, nor the next hour, nor the next moment. Now, is this priceless instant that is gliding by. Now, is the pulse that is beating, the breath that is passing, the twinkling of the eye, which is all but gone. Now, then, as you would be saved, say not, "At a convenient time." This time is not convenient. A thousand obstacles occur to you. And a convenient time will never come. If you wait for it, you will wait till the hand of time tolls the knell of another sinner lost, lost! To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, lest He say in His wrath that ye shall not enter into His rest!

To-day is the most convenient time. You are a living soul. Sin has corrupted, but has not yet destroyed, you. God is calling you. All things are ready. Your salvation is as near as that which the prodigal found, when, returning to his father's presence, he dared to hope only, for rescue from a shocking death, not for full forgiveness. Seek it just as he sought. Say, "I will arise and go to my Father." Having said so, lose no time!—do it! Do it now! Do it, because it is right because it is the one thing to be done, because Christ invites you to do it. Arise, and come to your Father. Say, however your heart may fail, and your voice hesitate,—ay, force yourself to say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight; and am no more worthy to be called Thy son." Perhaps Mercy will stop thee there, in the very *act of confessing*, and pour the full tide of forgiving love into thy astonished heart, and make thee feel as if all heaven were singing, and the Everlasting Father saying of thee, "This My son was dead, and is alive again: he was lost, and is found!"

A LETTER ADDRESSED TO A MOTHER ON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN SON.

Dear Young Friend,—Many important duties devolve upon you, as a wife and mother, to train up the little immortal for heaven's glory. Children, and especially boys, are said to be what their mother makes them.

The instruction, the influence, the prayers, the example, of a mother go with them to a period beyond that which no thought can reach or imagination conceive.

If the boy is spared to live with you many years, your influence, your deportment, will never be banished from his mind, amid all the vicissitudes of life; joy, or sorrow, sickness or health—by land or water, on his native shores, or in foreign countries—in time or eternity. If other things are forgotten, a mother never will be obliterated from the memory. You, mother, will probably be the source of exquisite joy in the world of bliss, or of the bitterest and

most heart-corroding sorrow in the world of woe, millions of ages hence.

What a solemn and momentous thought to carry with you, the next twenty years, if God should see fit to continue you both in life so long.

In training the child, it is not only a few set hours of the day, called the school hours, in which you are training him, but by every cast of your countenance, by the look of your eye, by the movements of life, by your temper and habitual disposition, by the gravity and cheerfulness of your manners, by your transactions of business, by your deportment in domestic affairs, by all you say and all you do: by an influence unseen and unfelt by others, but not unseen and unfelt by him, you are daily making him an heir of glory or of misery, fitting him for usefulness in this world, or a drone in society, an idle, trifling, worthless character; and entailing upon him unnumbered blessings or cursings.

Solemn and most important consideration! you will probably be the chief instrument of his existing for ever in heaven's eternal sunshine, or in the deep caverns of eternal darkness. O that females did but consider how much is involved in the maternal character!

What examples of maternal tenderness and excellence do we find in the Word of Truth? Who presented Samuel to the Lord? His mother! Who ministered to his wants in the sanctuary, and made his little coat? His mother! Who travelled yearly to Shiloh to witness his behaviour? His mother! Who brought him to minister to the venerable Eli? His mother! Who taught David to lisp the praises of Jehovah? His mother! To whom does he most frequently refer in his incomparable song, but to his mother? Of whose piety does he boast? His mother's! "I am the son of thy handmaid." Who laid the foundation of Timothy's piety, and prepared him for being the companion of Paul, but his mother and grandmother?

O, mothers! it belongs to you to fill your country with patriots, and the church with members, the sanctuary with ministers, and heaven with saints!"

SORROW IN SERVICE.

"AND looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, 'Ephphatha,' *that is*, 'Be opened.'"—Mark vii. 34. Jesus had just healed a case of demoniacal possession at a distance from Him; and He is now curing another person who is *brought* to Him. The first was done by a word, the second by a touch—the one without means, the other by the use of means. How sovereign and how successful are His cures! The person last referred to was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech. How thankful should we be, who are not deaf and dumb; but we should also be careful lest we so misuse our ears and tongue, that we wish we had been in the day of judgment!

All by nature are spiritually deaf and dumb. God's voice is not heard and heeded. God's praises are not uttered. Those who are in this sad case are so willingly. Jesus can cure such—He only can do it—He professes and promises to do it. (Isaiah xliii.) Yet few attend to His word, and ask him to put forth his power. If we would study the way in which He heals sinners on earth, we should be more encouraged to employ Him as regards our souls, and be directed how to do good to others as His instruments. This verse not only records *what* Jesus did, but shows us what kind of spirit He possessed and displayed, and stirs us up to seek to cultivate the same disposition. His was a spirit of active compassion; He went about doing good, and was always ready to effect it. His was a spirit of holy sorrow and deep pity—"He *sighed*." The misery of man made Him sigh. He could contrast this poor creature before Him with Adam in innocence. He saw in him the consequences of sin, and also a picture of what all men were spiritually, and He sighed over the wreck. He sighed also when He thought of the little lasting effect His wondrous miracles produced, and how they were often of a hardening tendency; and thus marvelled at, and marvelled over, the depravity of the human heart. He also displayed a *devotional* spirit—He sighed and *looked up to heaven*. He could grasp at once all man's misery, and all God's mercy. Hence, while He sighed and wept, He was not discouraged. Let us learn

from this to be hopeful. We often sigh, and look in—sigh, and look round—sigh, and look back, but forget to look up. We must expect reasons for sighing, even while attempting to do good ; but we must still persevere in our labours amidst all inward sorrows, and “not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.” The great preservation from fainting is to consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.

<p>“The Son of God, in doing good, Was fain to look to heaven and sigh; And shall the heirs of sinful blood Seek joy unmixed with charity?</p>	<p>“God will not let love’s work impart Full solace, lest it steal the heart; Be thou content in tears to sow Blessing, like Jesus, in thy woe.</p>
--	---

THE SATISFYING CONCLUSION.

“God, even our own God shall bless us.”—Ps. lxvii. 6.

How great is the difference between the believer and the worldling ! The latter has “a god which cannot save.” That which he hath chosen as his chief good, as the object of his solicitude, and the great end of his existence, has no power to bless him. This is proved by the disappointment of many while living, the despair of others when dying, and will be realised by millions in eternity who will for ever upbraid themselves for having chosen a shadow instead of substance—a false god instead of a true and living God. But consider the delightful conviction of real believers ; “God, even *our own* God, shall bless us.” Here we are taught this consoling truth *that whoever has chosen God as a portion, shall possess Him as a fountain of happiness.* For, choosing God includes renouncement of all other gods, turning the back upon the world, surrendering up our will to His. Such will rest upon His promises, rejoice in His mercy, and seek to regulate their actions by His word. All such *shall* be blessed ; all God’s attributes shall unite to do them good. Mercy shall comfort them, grace enrich them, power uphold them, wisdom guide them, holiness beautify them, faithfulness secure them, and glory crown them. God’s character ensures all this. *He will* bless, for he is the blessed God ; and for Him to bless, is for Him

to act in character. His past acts have been full of blessing. The history of His people shows that they are a people blessed of the Lord. He hath put His people in Christ on purpose to bless them with all spiritual blessings. (Eph. i. 3).

Concerning the Saviour, God hath declared "men shall be blessed in Him;" for in Him the promises, which are all full of blessings, "are yea and amen." Let us then, "abide in Him," and abide *with* His people; for as all blessings are found in Christ, so many of them are to be enjoyed in communion with His people. "Blessed be the Lord out of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

THE TWO COUSINS.*

THE sun was shining brightly into Mary Wilson's room when she awoke the next morning. It was quite early, but then it was hardly past the summer time, and the sun was up early, as all good children should be too. Mary felt rather sleepy still, and would gladly have rested a little longer, but she knew that she had a great deal to do, and that she should never get through the day's work if she allowed herself to be idle in the morning. So she sprang cheerfully out of bed, and dressed herself quickly, but neatly, not forgetting, however, to bend her knees, and lift her heart in gratitude to the kind Father, who had preserved her in safety through her sleeping hours, and to ask that His grace might be with her throughout the day she had just begun.

Then she set herself to work, to wake and dress her three little sisters, who slept in the same room; this task was rather a trial to her patience and temper, for they were all a little fidgetty and careless, as children will be sometimes and gave their kind elder sister a good deal more trouble than they need have done; but Mary was really very patient and good-tempered with them, she was resolved *not* to be cross with them, as she knew she was apt to be at times, *that* morning above all others—the very day after she had given her promise to her dear Miss Aubrey to try and keep her temper better guarded for the future. She had just been asking her heavenly Father to help her to do what was right throughout the day too, and

* From "The Story of a Week."—Wertheim and Macintosh.

it would indeed be careless if she allowed herself to fall before the very first temptation. And so, because she did not speak crossly to the children, or worse still, raise her hand against them, as she had been tempted to do more than once before; and just because she tried coaxing, instead of scolding, to induce them to stand still, the dressing was accomplished in much less time than usual, and without any of the little fretful cries, which so often accompanied this part of the morning's work. This over, she went to wake and help her mother, and get the breakfast ready, for poor Mrs. Wilson was but a sickly woman, and was almost blind, and Mary had a good deal more to do in the cottage than little girls often have to do at her age. However, she did it all well and cheerfully, and, as a reward, she had once overheard her mother say to a neighbour, "that she did not know however she should get on if it were not for her little Polly." They were the sweetest words she thought she had ever heard.

There was another trial in store for Mary Wilson before the morning wore away; the first trial had been a trial of temper, the second would rather touch her love of self. Will the little Christian child be able to bear this one? I think she will, not because she is strong—not because she is naturally unselfish, but because she is humble, and because she has taken the best means to enable her to bear it, by having so earnestly asked her God to help her! Miss Aubrey was to leave the rectory at twelve o'clock that day. Her carriage must pass the end of the lane on its way to the station—it must stop for a moment at the toll-gate, and so at this toll-gate, the two cousins, Mary and Fanny, had agreed to post themselves before the carriage arrived, to enable them to say good-bye once more, and to have one more smile from the kind face which they had learnt to love so well. They had told Miss Aubrey that, if possible, they should be there, and she had said she should be glad indeed to see them; and so they were both reckoning on this last meeting.

The old-fashioned clock in Mrs. Wilson's kitchen pointed to half-past eleven, and Mary was just about to ask her mother's leave to run down the lane and meet the carriage, when Mrs. Wilson came in equipped in bonnet and shawl, and told Mary to be sure and mind the dinner that was preparing, and to take great care of the children, for that she was just going into the road to meet Miss Aubrey, and say good-bye to her, as she went to the station.

The words were on Mary's lips, "Oh, mother, I promised to be at the gate;" but she stopped herself in time. She saw that the meeting would be a pleasure to her mother, and that dear blind mother had too few pleasures now for her to wish to deprive her of this one. She felt that she had but to speak one word of explanation, and that she would have her wish, self would be gratified, and in another moment she would be on her way to the meeting-place, whilst her mother was staying at home in her stead—she knew, I say, that one word would have done all this, but Mary was a little *heroine*, and she would not speak that word.

Do you know what it means, my dear children, to be a heroine? Heroes and heroines are those who do great and noble actions. In the world's history those have been called heroes who were brave and fearless, who did great deeds for their country, and even gave up their lives for the sake of others. You must all have heard of the hero of Switzerland, who to preserve his country's freedom, was willing to risk his own life. Again, weak women have been called heroines when they have forgotten the natural timidity of their sex, and have braved the dangers of the sea, or the land, to save or to benefit their fellow creatures, as Grace Darling did in her father's life-boat, or Florence Nightingale did in the Crimean hospital. All honour be to these noble men and women. I would not rob them of one iota of their well earned praise—of their rightful place in people's memories and hearts. But still I think that there are other heroes and heroines besides these,—Silent ones, of whom the world may never hear, whom the *world* might not delight to honour; for if to be heroic is to do great and noble deeds, then those are heroic who, as the poet says know how to "suffer and be strong;" who watch by the weary bed of sickness day after day with uncomplaining patience, without thanks, almost without reward; who can submit to the injustice and ill temper of others without striving to avenge themselves by one angry word or deed; who can overcome their own inclinations, and their own selfishness, for the sake of those who will never know the effort it has cost them to do so.

In the sight of God I believe they are counted greater heroes who conquer themselves than they who conquer others. We know who hath said, "He that is slow to anger is greater than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

As I said before, our little friend Mary was a heroine in her way when she resisted the temptation to speak the selfish words, which would in a moment have induced her kind mother to send her to the meeting place in her stead.

"Tell dear Miss Aubrey I am at home minding the children, mother," was all she trusted herself to say; for she did not wish her teacher to think that either negligence or forgetfulness had kept her away. "You can show your love to me best by doing what is right," Miss Aubrey had said the day before, and Mary trusted she would understand.

Slowly the minutes passed away, and twelve o'clock struck at last. Mary sat disconsolately, looking into the fire.

"Sister Polly cry, poor sister Polly," said a little voice, and in another moment a childish form had climbed up on to her knee, and childish arms were clinging about her neck.

It was too true, all she could do, she could not help the two big tear-drops which had gathered in each eye, and were now rolling down her cheeks. She did not know how much she had reckoned on the morning's meeting until now that it was too late. Not because she had not cared for the pleasure, but because she had put duty before pleasure, was she sitting there at home; but the disappointment was none the less keenly felt. But already the child's caresses, and the precious words of sympathy had done her good, as they will do good always except to those whose hearts are steeled against them by sin, or by an evil conscience. She kissed the little comforter, and keeping her on her knee, told the others to sit beside her, and she would tell them a pretty story till mother came back.

Wise girl! she knew it would be worse than useless to go on thinking and fretting about what could not be helped.

And so intent did she become upon her loving work, and so busy with the task of telling to the children the beautiful story of Joseph and his Brethren in such simple words as their little minds could understand, that she never heard the latch of the outer door gently lifted; she never heard the sound of a light footstep on the sanded floor; she never knew that Gertrude Aubrey was standing behind her,—until a soft hand was laid upon her shoulder, and a sweet face looked into hers, and a kind voice whispered into her ear, "Well done, my little Mary."

Mary started and sprang up, but the joy was too much for her ; the pleasure she had just been teaching herself to do without, now that it had come upon her so suddenly, was too trying, and the unbidden tears rushed to her eyes much faster than they had done when she had been only grieving over her own disappointment.

But Miss Aubrey understood it all. She had seen the drooping eyelid and the tear-stained cheek from the first, and she knew well what the previous effort of self-denial must have been, and what the little girl was feeling now ; so she sat down in Mary's chair, and putting her arm round her waist, drew her towards her. Mary could not speak, she could only sob, while Miss Aubrey went on to tell her that she knew exactly how it was, when her mother had told her she was at home, and as she had a few minutes to spare, she had left Mrs. Wilson to talk to the Rector, and had run down the lane to have a peep at Mary, as Mary could not come to have a peep at her. She soothed her with kind words, and bade her always do what was right, as she had done that morning, until the little girl looked up again and smiled—such a happy smile ;—and when the parting kiss had been given, and Miss Aubrey was really gone, Mary went about the rest of the day's work with a light heart and a cheerful spirit which quite surprised herself ; she even found herself singing at her work on the very afternoon of the day which she had been dreading for weeks past. And why, do you think ? Because she was happy in the testimony of a good conscience, and her cheerful song (though perhaps she did not know it) was but her spirit's psalm of thanksgiving for its victory over self.

O DOUBTING HEART.

Where are the swallows fled ?
Frozen and dead,
Perchance upon some bleak and stormy shore.
O doubting heart !
Far over purple seas,
They wait in sunny ease,
The balmy southern breeze,
To bring them to their northern home once more.

Why must the flowers die ?
Prisoned they lie
In the cold tomb, heedless of tears or rain.
O doubting heart !
They only sleep below
The soft white ermine snow,
While winter winds shall blow,
To breathe and smile upon you soon again.

The sun has hid its rays
These many weary days ;
Will dreary hours never leave the earth ?
O doubting heart !
The stormy clouds on high
Veil the same sunny sky,
That soon (for spring is nigh)
Shall wake the summer into golden mirth.

Fair hope is dead, and light
Is quenched in the night ;
What sound can break the silence of despair ?
O doubting heart !
The sky is overcast,
Yet stars shall rise at last,
Brighter for darkness past,
And angels' silver voices stir the air.

WHAT LUCY'S MAMA SAID AND WHAT LUCY DID.

"Lucy," said Mama, "I expect my friend Mrs. Ward and her little daughter Lucy to spend the day with me. While the two Mamas are engaged in conversation the two little daughters may also engage in conversation suitable for them. You remember the motto with which you began the year, namely, 'to be good, to do good, and to get good,' to day you will have an opportunity of doing good to your little friend Lucy. Let me hear, love, how you will set about it."

"First of all Mama, I shall try to get her to like me by doing all I can to amuse her, showing her my dolls and my toys, then I shall

take her into the garden and show her the flowers and give her a nice ripe plum, then, I shall teach her a little text."

"Very good" said Mama, "now there is the carriage, run off to meet her."

Lucy met her little friend with beaming eyes, took her by the hand, led her into the play-room, and showed her all she could think of that was pretty; after a time they walked hand in hand to the garden, where, after admiring flower after flower they turned to the fruit trees, and selected a delicious plum, the plum being discussed, they went out on the lawn and rested themselves upon a rustic seat, when Lucy, who had seen six birth-days, began thus to Lucy who had only seen four:—"You are four years of age, Lucy, and I would like to teach you a little text. The text shall only have four words, the first word shall only have one letter, the letter *I*; the second shall have two letters, *am*; the third shall have three, *the*; and the fourth shall have four, *door*. 'I am the door.' *I* means Christ, and whenever I have occasion to write that text I mean to make the *I* very large, for Christ is so great. I am so glad that Christ told us that He is the door into heaven, for I feel so sure of His kindness and love that He will let me in whenever I ask, but remember Lucy you must ask Him. He is very grieved indeed when little girls care so little for Him as never to speak to Him, nor ask Him for any of the good things that He is holding out to them all the day long. He says, 'Come to Me, Lucy—look to Me, Lucy—speak to Me, Lucy.' 'Now,' said Lucy, 'embracing her, will you speak to Christ to-night, Lucy, and every night, and never forget Him.'" Lucy answered, "I will." The two girls joined the mamas looking so happy; and why? because they had been good, done good, and got good.

PEACE.

We might enjoy much peace, if we did not busy our minds with what others do and say, in which we have no concern. But how is it possible for that man to dwell long in peace, who continually intermeddles in the affairs of others; who runs about seeking occasions of disquietude, and never, or but seldom, turns to God, in the retirement of a recollected spirit?

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE PENITENT THIEF.

A Sermon,

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY MORNING, MAY 31, 1853,

BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.,

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—LUKE xxiii. 42, 43.

WE need not tell you that this conversation took place when our blessed Saviour was on the cross, and that the party who addresses Christ is one of the two thieves who had been crucified with him, in order to give greater indignity to his death. While the Redeemer was suspended between heaven and earth, the surrounding multitude challenged him to give proof that he was the Messiah, by coming down from the cross and saving himself. The chief priests declared themselves ready to acknowledge him as Christ if he would thus demonstrate his might, and they therefore joined with the common people in demanding the sign. We cannot think it strange that our Lord, who undoubtedly, had he chosen, could have given the required proof, should have persisted in withholding it; he had already furnished an accumulation of evidence which had failed in convincing his countrymen. He was, moreover, about to give a mightier sign than was asked with so much insolence and pertinacity; his raising himself from the dead was a more stupendous act than would have been his descent from the cross; and he who could look forward, and observe how the evidence of this miracle would be resisted, must have felt well assured that even had he hearkened to the call, and loosed himself from the tree, the multitude, if for an instant overawed, would have quickly again shouted, "Away with him, away with him." It appears from the account given by St. Luke, that one of the two thieves who were crucified with Christ joined in the demand that he should descend from the cross; but St. Matthew says—"The thieves also which were with him cast the same in his teeth." At first, in all probability, both the thieves reviled Christ, but afterwards, the one receiving the grace of God into his heart, rebuked his companion, and sought pardon from Jesus. If we adopt this supposition, the only one reconciling the accounts of the two Evangelists, we must believe (and why should we not?) that the whole of the work of conversion was done during the brief hours of suffering, so that he who was a blasphemer when nailed to the cross became a believer before life was extinguished. Many writers, indeed, suppose that the penitent thief had enjoyed previous advantages—that either whilst in prison, or at some other period, he had been led to give attention to the pretensions of Christ. Thus one thief is thought to have brought to the cross a disposition towards Christ which was not possessed by the other, so that in his last agony he only publicly avowed a faith that had been before gathering within his breast. It may have been so; but at least you should remember, that if it were, two of the Evangelists have mis-stated the facts, seeing that both St. Matthew and St.

The Mother's Magazine. July, 1860.

THE PENITENT THIEF.

Mark affirm that both thieves joined in reviling our Lord. We are free to declare our persuasion, that much of the beauty of the history lies in its showing the possibility of an instantaneous effect being given to the preaching of the gospel. In ordinary cases we believe it to be gradual, so that a man passes by slow and painful steps from darkness to light; but there is nothing in the gospel to render this indispensable—on the contrary, a moment may be long enough to scatter the moral shadows, and pour in the moral sunshine. What does the gospel mean but good news; and is it absolutely necessary that there should be weeks of sadness or depression before the good news can work its natural effect, and produce gladness and rejoicing of heart? No, it is the property of good news to cheer and to animate. There is nothing but, "Do you believe the news to be true?" and then, if it be also good, you will immediately be conscious of an emotion of delight. At least, if there be a heart on which good news does not instantly tell, it must be one which has been so long familiar with grief that its veins have grown withered—one in which sorrow is so naturalized that the very power is gone of bidding joy welcome. There is no reason against a man's receiving at first hearing the message of Christianity as good news from a far-off country. Any one of you who may have come up to God's house a practical stranger to the tidings which have been brought down from the world of spirits, may, as we go on with the sermon, feel his heart open to admit the glorious communication, and then go away from the sanctuary with all those rich and thrilling emotions which shall testify that it is gospel he has heard, good and blessed news from the far-off home of his spirit; ay, and we are thoroughly persuaded that there is not an immortal being within sound of our voice who may not at this very day, at this very hour, give heed to a message which shall come home to him with all the freshness of a first announcement, or who may not, from having his thoughts turned to Christ on the throne, realise to the very letter the experience of the thief, so that although he may have brought with him a disposition to neglect the Saviour, or even—for such hardihood is possible—to deride, he shall depart with all the ecstacy and satisfaction of soul which must follow on the conviction such as was declared in our text of the penitent thief, there is reserved for him an inheritance in Paradise.

And now we will proceed with the history before us on the supposition we have shown to be most Scriptural—that when first nailed on the tree both thieves equally reviled the Redeemer. What instrumentality, then, was used for their conversion, successfully in the one instance though not in the other? You are all aware that God's ordinary engine for the conversion of sinners is the preaching of his Word. We think that it was so here. Lifted on the cross, Christ used it not only as an altar but as a pulpit, from which to deliver the most touching of sermons. It was not merely that he preached by the beauty of his patience and his meekness, there must indeed have been a voice in this which ought to have spoken to the most hardened of the multitude, producing conviction of his innocence, and contrition for the share taken in his condemnation and crucifixion; but we may consider the prayer which Christ uttered for his murderers as most strictly the sermon which the malefactor heard, and which, carried home to his heart by the Spirit of God, wrought in him the change so quickly and strikingly developed. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" these, we think, were the words which penetrated the conscience of the thief, and assured him that the being who hung at his side was none other than the promised Saviour of the world; for there was contained in that prayer a distinct claim to the being the Christ—for since the Jews crucified him for pretending to be the Messiah, Christ's saying that they knew not what they did, amounted to an assertion that he actually was the Messiah. And this claim thus repeated, when it was too late to expect its being admitted, was not urged, as it might have been by an impostor, with bitterness and virulence—on the contrary, it was advanced in a petition for the forgiveness of the very parties by whom he was denied, and thus, at one and

the same instant, Jesus declared himself the Christ, and evinced a disposition showing that he could not be a deceiver; and independently of giving a proof of his being the Christ, the prayer gave the most ample encouragement to the very worst of transgressors. If Jesus were not a deceiver, it was not possible to imagine a more heinous offence than was perpetrated by his murderers, and nevertheless it appeared that those murderers were not excluded from forgiveness, inasmuch as Jesus made that forgiveness the subject matter of prayer to the God whom he had right to call Father. But if there were pardon for those who crucified Christ, there must be also for every offender; and hence the thief, if once led to believe that Jesus was the Christ, would be further led to see forgiveness possible, and thus apply to his fellow-sufferer for salvation. So that in that short prayer which we have characterised as the sermon of Christ, there was all the publication of the gospel, which is ordinarily made effectual, by God's Spirit, to conversion. There was a distinct announcement that every sin may be pardoned through the intercession of Christ, and what is this but the sum and substance of the gospel? and this preaching it was which, without indulging in fanciful supposition, we may believe to have been instrumental to change of heart in the malefactor. The Spirit of God took the prayer of Christ, as it often does a sentence or a text from the mouth of one of his ministers, and, winging it with power, sent it into the very soul of the man who had just reviled the Redeemer. And then it is beautiful to observe how immediately there came forth the tokens of genuine and thorough conversion. The dying thief confessed his sinfulness, and manifested no anxiety but for the honour of Christ, and for the salvation of his partner in crime. "He rebuked," we are told, "the other thief, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amiss;" and it was not until he had thus confessed sin, rebuked impiety, and magnified Jesus, that his thoughts turned on his own deliverance. But what deliverance did he seek? When first nailed to the cross he had no conviction that Jesus was the Christ, but joined in the taunting cry that he should prove himself the Christ by saving himself and them; but as soon as assured that Jesus was the Christ, he seemed to lose all anxiety in respect to the present, and to centre all his thoughts on the future. You must have expected that he who had asked jeeringly to be taken from the cross, believing Jesus every whit as powerless as himself would have urged the same request seriously and earnestly when convinced that Jesus had full ability to comply: but observe the great change which had been wrought in his feelings. He had acquired spirituality of mind. Hitherto earth had been his home, but now he felt heaven to be his home; therefore he no longer desired to be released from anguish, and return to the scenes and companions of his crimes. He believed, indeed, that Jesus might, if he pleased have done this; but higher and nobler thoughts had possession of the dying man's soul; he had heard of the forgiveness of sins—he had heard an address to God as the Father, and he believed that the being who, in all the weakness of humanity, hung at his side, dying like himself the death of the malefactor, was none other than the long-promised deliverer, who was to achieve for man a sublime moral rescue; and therefore these were more lofty and glorious things than a lengthened life, whatever its length and happiness, that passed before the dying thief; he turned to Jesus, and asked him, not to extract the nails by a word, not to restore the failing energies, and send him back to the employments of earth—heaven and its glories occupied his thoughts, and "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" burst from his lips. It was a wonderful request. What a faith did it exhibit! He recognised a king in the dying man, and saw that the cross was the high road to the throne; he felt and proclaimed his own immortality, and knew himself no destructible thing, though the ministry of death were breaking down the fleshy tabernacle; but once assured that he had yet to enter on untried and unlimited destinies, he, therefore,

asked to be remembered when all this sin and suffering should have passed away, and another and a wider range of being should spread before him. And "remember me." He only asked to be remembered; but it was the memory of a king, and that king Messiah, Lord of the invisible world, in whose chambers he solicited a place; and thus he evinced a thorough faith in the saving power of Jesus. What advantage the being remembered by Jesus unless Jesus could procure for him that pardon which he had been asking for his crucifiers? What advantage the being remembered by a king, except that as king he must have authority to portion out allotments of happiness? So that it is no overwrought or exaggerated statement that the dying thief exhibited all the tokens which can ever be demanded of a genuine conversion. There was confession of sin, there was spirituality of mind, there was anxiety for others, there was the fullest recognition of Christ's power to deliver, and there was a mighty faith which, nothing daunted by all the circumstances of apparent helplessness and defeat, were sufficient to confound and overcome distance, sprang beyond the line of death and shame, and seemed to gaze on the palace and the crown; and though he had not an opportunity of showing by an altered life that his heart was renewed, yet his faith in Christ was so stupendous an act, that no one can doubt that, had space been allowed for development, every action would have proved its reality. The thief was, perhaps, the only individual who believed on Jesus when Jesus died, and certainly it was an amazing thing, that he who was hanging beside Christ should believe, while he who had laid in his bosom had doubted; it must, we think, be at once admitted, that nothing but a genuine faith could have broken forth at such a time; so that the mere fact that the thief confessed Christ when all others denied or forsook him furnishes as resistless evidence of the reality of his conversion as could even be obtained from a long life of holiness. So that it was not on any slight marks of change that Jesus proceeded when he spoke comforting words to the dying thief. The malefactor had given the strongest possible demonstration of repentance and faith; he had heard the gospel preached, it had entered into his heart, and, conviction being there produced, confession followed. The two conditions laid down by St. Paul thus received fulfilment—"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and though all the proofs were gathered into a moment of time, instead of being spread over months or years, yet was there in them a vigor and clearness which irresistibly proved a renewal of mind. So that we must be borne out in asserting, that it was to a man whose repentance had been ascertained to be genuine, whose faith had been shown mighty, and whose holiness could be so seen as to prove that space only was wanting for its manifestation—it was to such a man as this, and not to one who, driven by the approach of death to think of the soul, mutters a few prayers, expresses some regrets, and then receives the sacrament, that Christ made the blessed declaration—"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Now we thus naturally pass from reviewing the history of the penitent thief to the exposing the falseness of certain hopes which that history has been made to encourage. We may all be aware that what is called death-bed repentance has been identified with the repentance of this malefactor—that men have encouraged themselves from it, in deferring to the end of life the providing for eternity. They have urged that if a thief, and perhaps a murderer, who had outraged every law of God and of man, found mercy at the eleventh hour, and went straightway from the cross to paradise, there can be no probability against others whose crimes are of a far less awful dimension, repenting on a death-bed, and obtaining, whilst in the act of dissolution, a full and free forgiveness. Now, my brethren, we set no bounds to the compassions of God, and therefore we must admit frankly that genuine and effectual repentance on a death-bed is altogether possible, though we believe that, like startling prodigies, instances occur but seldom in a century; however, we are not at present

THE PENITENT THIEF.

concerned with the general question of the possibility or the probability of a death-bed repentance, but only with the degree of encouragement which is given to the expectation by the history of the thief. And here we can be certain that if ever a Scriptural history were abused, the history before us is abused, when brought to give countenance to the worth of repentance on a death-bed. Even if we allow that the repentance of the thief was the same thing with what is called death-bed repentance among Christians, what is the encouragement which it gives? Do men forget that two thieves were crucified with Christ, the one on his right hand and the other on his left, and do they forget that, although one was saved, the other perished? And yet both had the same advantages—both heard the sermon, both were within arms' length of the Saviour—yet one soared to heaven, the other sank to hell. What, then, on the most favorable supposition, is the amount of encouragement? You have, if you will, the history of two men on a death-bed; the Saviour preaches to both, is reviled by the one and received by the other. When, therefore, you have made all that can be made of the history, you only bring out that there is just an equal likelihood of your repenting on your death-bed, and of your not repenting. Will this satisfy you? Who can feel encouraged by the history to put off repentance, when he can only prove it to the full as probable that he shall be lost as that he shall be saved, if he defer to a death-bed the turning to God? He must be singularly unconcerned as to his soul—Sirs, he cannot feel that he has a soul—who can be satisfied in pursuing a plan, which, on the best calculation, leaves exactly equal the chances of being condemned and of being saved. Yet stay: even this amount of encouragement, if men will persist in calling that encouragement which makes despair equal to hope, even this amount is only to be obtained by supposing our own circumstances and those of the thief precisely the same. A man must be able to show that when stretched on a death-bed, he shall be in the same moral position as the thief when nailed to the cross. It is clear that nothing can be more unwarranted than his arguing from the certainty of the thief repenting, to the likelihood of himself repenting; and we are confident that there is not one amongst you who can possibly, when his death-bed draws nigh, stand morally in the same position. Which of you is there who can hear the gospel for the first time on his death-bed? Yet this in all probability was the case with the thief. Which of you is there who can come, as we may suppose the thief came, a heathen, or at most an uninstructed Jew, at the last hour? Ye cannot drive the baptismal waters from your foreheads; ye may make yourselves apostates—ye cannot make yourselves heathens. Thus there will be separating circumstances between yourselves and the malefactor, which ought to prevent your making his repentance, the ground-work of an indication, that you may repent at the last. The man who professedly puts off repentance, must necessarily smother conviction: he will therefore carry with him to his death-bed a seared a blunted conscience; he will have refused Christ fifty, or a hundred, or a thousand times; he will have grieved the Spirit, and possibly have quenched it by his obstinate resolve to defer what he had been made to feel essential; whereas, in all probability, the thief had never determined to put off repentance; he had never resisted the Spirit; he had never heard the gospel, he had never rejected Christ. And will any one of you dare to think, that with all this difference between himself and the malefactor, he can be warranted in so identifying the cases as to consider the last hour of life well-fitted for the work of repentance, or to bolster himself up with the flattering persuasion, that what happened to the dying thief will happen also to him—that just as life ebbs away there shall flow in upon one who has despised a thousand warnings and steeled his heart by long despite to the Spirit of God, all that glorious tide of faith and of assurance which rolled into the soul of a long-lost prodigal, who had never before been invited home, never heard the wonderful announcement, that those condemned justly at a human tribunal, might still find acquittal at a divine, and who still, in

this, his last extremity, having shown an unprecedented faith by giving utterance to the prayer—"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," was sustained by those gracious words of the Redeemer—"Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

But there is yet more to be said. It ought to strike every one, that he who of set purpose defers repentance to a death-bed should be able to prove that the thief of set purpose deferred repentance to a death bed, else the cases are so distinct that there is no excuse for believing that the final penitence of the one renders at all probable the final penitence of the other. But is it credible that the thief had of set purpose deferred repentance? His deportment, when first stretched on a death couch, was that of a scoffer: who would think that if long ago he had fixed his time for repenting, he would have entered on it reviling? Though if it were even certain that the thief had of set purpose deferred his repentance, and had before he was brought to the cross, which was his death-bed, all that hardness of spirit which is naturally produced by stifling conviction and resisting the Holy Ghost, we should still say that his case differed very materially from the probable one of any amongst ourselves. It was in certain senses an advantage to this criminal that he died by the hands of the public executioner; he knew the exact day and hour of his death, and therefore could have no share in a feeling so common with the sick and the old, that life may yet be prolonged, and still afford opportunity for repentance. No man thinks himself too old to live another year; few in possession of their faculties—and they cannot repent without them—think themselves too ill to recover. Thus, unless you are a criminal in the hands of justice, like the thief, you cannot well reach a time at which you may definitely assert, "I must return to God now or I never can;" there will be this striking distinction between your case and that of the thief; and this of itself should show men that they abuse the history when they encourage by it the hope of a death-bed repentance. The thief was certain that further delay would be fatal, for he knew that he must die—you will be always thinking that further delay may be safe, for you will be expecting to live. Besides—we would lay great stress upon this—the thief was not worn down by sickness; his death-bed was the death-bed of health; though undoubtedly suffering great pain and torment, there was none of that enfeeblement of mind which is ordinarily produced by bodily disease. He had all his senses about him; he could observe from his fearful elevation what was passing in the crowd, could hear their taunts and take part in the bitter reviling; and we seem at liberty to conclude from the whole account of the crucifixion, that whatever the amount of endured torture, there was not necessarily any interference with a most collected state of mind, but that every energy of the soul retained its full vigour, in place of being hampered and impaired, as it always will be by what we strictly term sickness. And thus was there an advantage on the side of the thief which none of us must expect in his last extremity; for we are as clear as upon a Scriptural truth, that the only man who can think of repenting on a death-bed is the man who never stood by a death-bed. It is want of acquaintance with the frightful power with which bodily disease assails the strongest mind—it is this only that will lead men to harbor the idea that such stupendous things as the things of eternity may be fairly grappled with in a fever or a consumption. We do not say sickness throws a man beyond the limits within which repentance is possible; but we do say that in sickness there is commonly such a prostration of mind—the mind so sympathises with the body, or rather is so swallowed up in it, that the probability is almost as an infinity to a unit, that he who has neglected God in health will be unable to seek him under the pressure of disease. And from all this mental overthrow the dying thief was exempt. It was not in the nature of his sufferings to effect that tremendous dislocation of the best powers of the soul, which every one familiar with sick rooms well knows to be produced by the rasping powers of disease; so that if we had adduced no other reason

we should think that enough had been adduced to overthrow the delusion, when we have shown you that the malefactor could collect all his faculties, clear and unimpaired, and could marshal them and concentrate them, whereas any one of you on the couch of weakness and of weariness may expect such a breaking down of the mind as will incapacitate him for thought, and that melancholy enervation of soul which shall render it, to say the least, the most surprising of prodigies if there be a bold travelling into an untrodden immensity, and a full laying hold on a neglected eternity. Tell me, then, is it quite right to think, that amid the emaciation of your last sickness you shall have power and collectedness of soul for this amazing prayer—"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom?" And what right have you to hope that you shall be soothed by the gracious words—"Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Now, when you combine the different arguments which have thus been successively brought before you, we think that you will agree with the conclusion that whatever other encouragements may strengthen men in deferring repentance to a death-bed, no encouragement can fairly be drawn from the history before us. You will observe that we have not been arguing the general question of the possibility or probability of death-bed repentance, but only the degree of encouragement which such repentance may fetch from the history of the thief upon the cross. We have had no other object than that of proving to you that the repentance of the thief cannot be so identified with what is termed death-bed repentance amongst ourselves as to afford the least encouragement to the opinion that there will be time enough at the last for the doing what we are commanded to do now; and thus we have exposed the unwarrantable use which some would make of the history. We have only, in conclusion, to point out briefly the lessons which it is calculated to furnish. The history of the dying thief offers no encouragement to those who would defer repentance; but it does offer encouragement, the fullest and the richest, to all who are sincerely desirous of being saved. As though it were appointed that the last act of the Mediator, ere he breathed out his soul into the hands of the Father, should bear witness to all ages that no case, as it were, could be too far gone for his power. Lo! the tree at whose roots the axe was already laid, which was trembling on the fall, and all but cast to the burning, is suddenly transplanted to the garden of the Lord, and shoots out branches which reach to the firmament, and are glorious in their verdure. Who can despair of finding mercy, when he sees a thief transported, as in a moment, from the cross to paradise? One thief, indeed perished, though within reach of the Saviour, and therefore we are bound to guard against presumption; the other was saved, though in the jaws of destruction, and therefore we are bidden never to despair. God thus set side by side the examples of his justice and mercy, teaching the men of every generation, that in their hope there should be no rash confidence, and in their fear no slavish despondency. Is there any one of you who accounts faith an easy thing, who supposes that when he pleases he can believe on a Saviour presented to him by the preaching of the Word, and in the ordinances of grace? Oh, let such an one look at the thief, placed so near to Christ that he might touch him with his hand, and could actually behold the precious blood flowing forth for the sins of the world, and yet perishing, perishing by the side and under the preaching of Jesus. Let the man who would represent salvation as a work of little difficulty, or easy achievement, survey this spectacle, and learn that if he would escape perdition he must agonize for deliverance. But, on the other hand, is there one amongst you who is tempted with the thought of having sinned beyond the reach of mercy—that his sins are too many and too aggravated, and that God has been wearied by his rebellion? We direct such an one to the penitent thief; we tell him he cannot be nearer hell than the malefactor was, who in the act of dying was in the act of reviling. If ever a man had reached the very edge of the bottomless pit the thief was that man; if ever case might have been thought

THE PENITENT THIEF.

desperate, his was that case; if ever Satan felt sure of his prey, he must have reckoned on it in this instance; but, omnipotent to deliver, Christ suddenly interposed, and, resistless even in death, snatched back the criminal just as he inclined over the precipice, and the burst of delighted wonder from the angelic company told out what joy there is in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Ay, and we would tell the sinner who may be cast down and troubled at the greatness of his offences, that if there be only a hair's-breadth between him and destruction, the sincere cry to Jesus shall produce the putting forth of the Redeemer's hand, and then for him, as for the thief on the cross, heaven and hell shall ring, the one with rejoicing at Christ's victory, and the other with lamenting at Satan's defeat. The man must be actually in hell before we can conclude him actually without reach of salvation; until the fearful line between life and death is crossed, the gates of paradise stand open, and no amount of crime can block up irremediably the entrance. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." This blessed truth holds good to the last moment of life, and against a huge mountain of guiltiness; and if you will all of you, for all of you may—I have no right to doubt, Scripture gives me no right to doubt, that salvation is within arms' length of every one in this assembly—if you will all of you send up in sincerity the penitent's prayer, "Lord, remember us in thy kingdom—remember us in thine intercession, remember us in the giving of thy Spirit, 'by thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, by thy precious death and burial, by thy glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, good Lord deliver us'"—if you do this, oh, when ye come to die one friend may suggest this consolation, and another that, relatives may weep bitterly, and kinsmen throng mournfully to the last farewell, and beloved ones perform assiduously kind offices to the departing, but the sustaining and cheering thing shall be, that you hear whispered words too penetrating, too heart-searching to be of the earth—"Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Sketches and Essays.

HORRIBLE MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS IN SYRIA.

THE distressing intelligence of the slaughter of thousands of Christians in Syria, and of the miserable condition of still greater numbers who have escaped from their burning villages, and sought refuge on the coast, cannot fail to excite the deepest sympathy in England. On the mountains of Sidon, the Mohammedans burnt the villages, the convents, and the churches, and drove the Christians at the point of the sword, killing many of them. Of those who managed to reach Sidon, three hundred and thirty-five were killed at the gates, and in the streets of the city, by their fanatical enemies—the government troops taking part in the slaughter. The Druses were attacking the village of Babda, containing some thousands of inhabitants. The Pasha of Beyrout, who was not more than about four hundred yards from the place, with 600 regular troops, and many Bashi-Bazonks, when appealed to by European consuls, refused to interfere; yet he did not prevent his men from joining in the attack and pillage. At Hasbeiya, the site of the first Protestant Church in Syria, the Christian population having exhausted their ammunition, laid down their arms, and being promised their lives by the Turkish military governor, were collected in the palace, when they were killed in cold blood by his people. Hasbeiya is a beautiful village at the foot of Hermon, and close to the source of the Jordan. It contains, or did before the massacre, a population of 5,000 Christian souls, chiefly of the Greek "orthodox" church. To Protestant Christendom Hasbeiya should be a place of the utmost possible interest, for it was here that preaching of evangelical truth had borne more fruit than anywhere else in Syria. The Protestants numbered in this village upwards of two hundred; they had a native pastor and a regular church of their own—the latter having been built chiefly by their own contributions.

The Mother's Magazine. August, 1860.

Of that Protestant community, which a fortnight ago was full of spiritual as well as material life, two men now live to tell the tale of their butchery, whilst of their 4,000 Greek fellow-Christians but thirty-three men have survived, and the fate of their wives and children is worse than uncertain. The following account of the horrid butchery is from a Beyrout correspondent, of the *Daily News*;—The village was attacked by an overwhelming body of Druses. The Christians armed to repel them, and for two days held their own, on the third driving back the enemy. Hitherto, the commander of the Turkish troops had stood aloof, although—as was the case at Sidon, at Deir-el-Kamar, and at Hasbeiya—he had troops enough at his command to repel and defeat the Druses, had he so wished. When he saw that the Christians were gaining the day, he called them back, and, in the name of the Sultan, ordered them to retire within the seraglio (a large building, covering nearly an acre of ground, and containing a residence of the commander, as well as the barrack), and to give up their arms, as he, the local representative of the Government, would conduct them all safe to Damascus. The Christians obeyed him, returned, gave up their arms, which were immediately packed up, and sent towards Damascus, but with so absurdly small an escort, that the Druses took possession of both the muskets and the mules that carried them within an hour of their leaving the place. The Christians asked again and again to be sent with their families, as promised, to Damascus. For nearly a week they were put off with some pretext or other, until, on the sixth day after their being disarmed (during which time the Turkish soldiers had prevented any of them from leaving the precincts of the seraglio), two Druse sheiks of great influence arrived, and had a conference of several hours with the Turkish commander of troops. No sooner was this conference ended than the Christians observed that the harem (wives, women, and children), as well as the property of the commander, was being removed from the seraglio, and that the Turkish soldiers also removed their baggage outside. Suspecting treachery, many of the Christians tried to escape from the place, but were prevented by the bayonets of the troops; whilst their women and children were ordered, and compelled to remove to the large upper chambers of the buildings, the men being forced to remain below. By this time it was known that many hundreds of armed

Druses were close to the town. The troops had hardly made their aforesaid arrangements when the Druses were admitted into the seraglio, and rushed like hungry tigers upon the unarmed mob in the court-yard. No man was spared. In ten minutes the very stones were inch deep in human blood. No butchery ever known in history equalled this in ferocity and cowardice.

In half an hour upwards of a thousand strong men were hacked to death. Some few tried to escape, but were driven back by the bayonets of the Turkish soldiers (regular troops, not Bashi-Bazouks), and the Druses had their revel of blood undisturbed; mothers, wives, daughters, and young children witnessing from above the massacre of their relatives. I could enter into more details, but sicken at the task. Would to heaven it were a fable or a dream! In the slaughter some few hid in out-of-the-way chambers—others escaped notice from being heaped over by the dead, and these, by God's mercy, managed in the night to escape. Of the fate of the women and children nothing is yet certain, but from what is known of the Turkish soldiers it is feared that the fate of the former will be one worse than death. Of the Protestant community not a man escaped, but more than one of the Greek Christian refugees bear witness how they met their fate, exhorting others to turn to the Saviour, and to pray to Him in their last hour. The latest news from this scene of desolation is that, after the fall of Zehrab, and numerous other places, chiefly inhabited by Christians, old and populous Damascus itself is in danger, being surrounded by a threatening horde of Druses from the Southern Lebanon, and of Bedouins and Kurds, who, for the sole sake of plunder, have associated with them. The Turkish Government, too, is sending a commissioner and reinforcements—no less a person than Fuad-Pasha being chosen for the difficult task. As Damascus is situated at a considerable distance from the sea, it is to be feared, that, if the inhabitants should not succeed in defending their town themselves, further dreadful tales of massacre and pillage, and on a larger scale than any that have hitherto taken place, will have to be recorded. Besides, all reports agree in describing the presence of Turkish troops, near a place in danger from the Druses, to be as worse than valueless.

“COME OVER AND HELP US.”

THE Macedonian voice still speaks, and its tones of supplication were never more earnest than at this moment. From the regions of the East, especially, it comes with a wailing sound sufficient to pierce the very hearts of those whose sensibilities have been quickened by a perception of their own state by nature, and who forget not the deep debt of obligation which they owe to the Saviour, and to those men of God who have hazarded their lives in the enterprise of bringing the Gospel to this remote corner of the earth. Had the missionary spirit slumbered in the early Church, Britons might have been idolaters to this day; and if the Christians of England were but animated with the zeal of those men who felt that they owed their all, and themselves beside, to Him who, for their sakes, became poor, many a place, now morally dreary as a sandy desert, would be covered with streams, and blossom as the rose. In a letter just received from the veteran missionary of Africa, Mr. Moffatt, written in the dominions of the great despot of that land, the renowned Moselekatse, there is a touching passage, which should serve as a stimulus to the friends of missions. He writes: “The people are healthy and no sickness that I have heard of ever prevails among the cattle. The grasses are of a fine description, and the many evergreen trees and shrubs give the landscape a lovely appearance. Man only is vile. Oh! they are savage, they are savage, they are ignorant and wicked. How indescribably lovely would this region be, were it studded over with little hills of Zion, and from them anthems of praise ascending to the Divine Redeemer, instead of the thousands of hoarse war-songs which anon resound from every town and hamlet through the Matabelian dominion!” How “full of hope, and yet of heartbreak,” are such words as these. At one time it seemed the most unlikely thing in the world that Christian teachers would be able to obtain entrance among these desperately-savage tribes; and had there been no Robert Moffatt or David Livingstone, or men of like spirit and devotedness to their Master, generations yet of the Matabele might have lived and died without even so much as having heard of Jesus and the way to heaven. He who willeth that all men should come to a knowledge of the truth has blessed the efforts for

many years of his devoted servant, and Mr. Moffatt has had the unspeakable joy of placing two missionaries and their two wives in the neighbourhood of Moselekatse's residence, and that of his two hundred wives, with full liberty for them to instruct the people in those things which shall make for their peace. The land given them for their settlement is said to be a well-watered valley, with a fine rich soil, bounded in the far distance with handsome and useful trees. Who shall predict the issue of this little mission in the centre of Africa? Regarding it in the light of history, whether our own, the West Indies, or the South Seas, we may confidently expect a glorious harvest from this little seed; and be assured that it is another step in the realization of the promise that "Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God."

Wherever we look doors are opening, and on the churches of England and America rests the obligation to enter and take possession in the name of the Lord. But ere this will be done we shall have to witness the revival among our Christian young men of the spirit of the crusades. At present we seem not to have sufficient faith in God, the gospel, or ourselves, to lead us in numbers at all adequate to the greatness of the work, to forsake our domestic comforts, and to volunteer to go forth in the service of our Great Captain. We would be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," contented and grateful for our own conversion, while the world—the millions of China, and of India, and of Africa—still grope in the darkness and pass onward to eternity without hope. Surely it is time for us all to awake out of sleep, and to inquire with earnest hearts concerning our duty in these eventful times, and with the full determination to follow in whatever path Providence may lead.

Fifty young men are wanted at this moment by the London Missionary Society. Let men be forthcoming for the work of the world's conversion, and means to send them forth and sustain them will be abundant. It is the personal devotion that we lack in the missionary cause; which assuredly would not be if a deeper religious life pervaded the churches; for in regard to all other schemes of "high emprise," men are found in ample numbers to undertake them. We are rejoiced to observe that our excellent friend Mr. Thompson, of Prior-park, has taken up this subject, and addressed a letter to the churches and schools of England, with a view to the placing

before them the nobleness of the missionary work, in the hope that many ardent youths may have their thoughts turned in that direction, and go forth in the strength of the Lord to overthrow many a stronghold of idolatry and sin.

THE STILL HOUR.

WHY fleest thou from solitude? Why dost thou shun the lonely hour? Why passeth thy life away like the feast of the drunkard? Why is it, that to many of you, there cometh not, through the whole course of the week, a single hour for self-meditation? You go through life like dreaming men. Ever among mankind, and never with yourselves. . . . You have torn down the cloister, but why have you not erected it within your own hearts? Lo, my brother, if thou wouldst seek out the *still hour*, only a single one every day, and if thou wouldst meditate on the love which called thee into being, which hath overshadowed thee all the days of thy life with blessing, or else by mournful experiences hath admonished and corrected thee—this would be to draw near to thy God. Thus wouldst thou take Him by the hand. But whenever, in ceaseless dissipation of heart, thou goest astray, the sea of the Divine blessing shall surround thee on all sides, and yet thy soul shall be athirst. Wilt thou draw near to God? Then seek the *STILL HOUR*.—*Professor Phelps' "Still Hour."*

REPENTANCE.

"But I can't repent." Can't you? Perhaps you have repented already. The question is, what is it to repent? Are you sure you understand this? You may have made a mistake upon this point. When God commands you to repent, He commands you to change your mind. You have had wrong thoughts of God, wrong feelings towards God, and have pursued a wrong course of conduct in reference to God. Now if this is the case, of course you ought to repent; for you ought not to indulge wrong thoughts of God, or wrong feelings towards God, nor should you act contrary to God. *"But how am I to repent?"* Not by some mighty effort of the mind, but by *turning to God*, by

taking His own representations of Himself as contained in His Word, by receiving His thoughts, by embracing His promises, and resting upon His love as manifested in Christ. Now if you take God's word as you find it, and believe that He is good, ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all who call upon Him; so that He willeth not the death of a sinner; that He hath no pleasure in punishing His creatures: that He has offered up the greatest possible sacrifice in giving His beloved Son to die in the stead of sinners, in order that they may be saved easily, honourably, and eternally; that He waits to be gracious, and delights to show mercy; and if you look to God to subdue the enmity of your heart, and make you love and serve Him, the result of this will be, that your feelings toward God will change, you will be sorry that you have sinned against Him, will earnestly desire to be reconciled to Him, and, above all things to please Him. This will lead to newness of life, and you will live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present world. It is of no use trying to repent, in your sense of the word, while you indulge hard thoughts of God, or fancy that He would rather punish you than have mercy on you, or that He would rather send you to hell for your sins than save you and take you to heaven through the work and sacrifice of His beloved Son. Unless you believe God to be love, you will never love Him. Unless you believe Him to be plenteous in mercy and full of compassion toward you, and the like of you, you will never be sorry for your sins, or feel your heart melt in gratitude, humility, and thankfulness before Him.

DYING POOR AND DYING RICH.

"It was a sad funeral to me," said the speaker, "the saddest I have attended for years."

"That of Edmonson?"

"Yes."

"How did he die?"

"Poor, poor as poverty—his life was one long struggle with the world at every disadvantage. Fortune mocked him all the while with golden promises, that were destined never to know fulfilment."

"Yet he was patient and enduring," remarked one of the company

"Patient as a Christian—enduring as a martyr," was answered. "Poor man! he was worthy of a better fate. He ought to have succeeded, for he deserved success."

"Did he not succeed?" questioned the one who had spoken of his perseverance and endurance.

"No, sir, he died poor, as I had just said. Nothing that he put hand to ever succeeded. A strange fatality seemed to attend every enterprise."

"I was with him in his last moments," said the other, "and thought he died rich."

"No; he has left nothing behind," was replied.

"The heirs will have no concern as to the administration of the estate."

"He left a good name," said one, "and that is something."

"And a legacy of noble deeds that were done in the name of humanity," remarked another.

"And precious examples," said another.

"Lessons of patience in suffering, of hope in adversity, of heavenly confidence, when no sunbeams fell upon his path," was the testimony of another.

"And high trust, manly courage, heroic fortitude."

"Then he died rich!" was the emphatic declaration; "richer than the millionaire who went to his long home the same day, a miserable pauper in all but gold. A sad funeral did you say? No, my friend, it was rather a triumphal procession! Not the burial of a human clod, but the ceremonial attendant on the translation of an angel. Did not succeed! Why his whole life was a series of successes. In every conflict he came off the victor, and now the victor's crown is on his brow. No, no, he did not die poor, but rich, rich in neighbourly love, and rich in celestial affections."

"You have a new way of estimating the wealth of a man," said the one who had at first expressed sympathy for the deceased.

"Is it not the right way? He dies rich who can take his treasure with him to the new land where he is to abide for ever; and he who leaves all behind on which he has placed affection, dies poor indeed. Our friend died richer than Rothschild or Goldshmidt; his monument is built of good deeds and noble examples. It will abide for ever."

THE VALLEY OF ACHOR A DOOR OF HOPE.

THE morrow was to be my bridal day. All was bustle and joyful preparation. The light footfall of many a step sounded around me, and young voices and merry laughter made music in the dear old home. I was happy. Surely, I thought, my cup of joy is full. Ah! but there was one joy which I had never tasted, one joy I cared not to know, even that joy which the world cannot give. In the midst of prosperity, in the time of my bliss, God was not in all my thoughts. One there was who would have whispered to me of "better things," but she was "far, far away;" and, as I lay that night, the pale moonbeams streaming in at my window, and thought of the time twenty years before, when my dear mother in heaven had been a bride like me, happy and hopeful, I seemed to hear her softly whisper, "The fashion of this world passeth away." Ah, my mother, even from thy "lips of air" the warning came unheeded. Soon my thoughts turned to him, my soul's idol, who was to lead me through the flowery path of life. Oh, how bright and beautiful that path looked, stretching far away amid the golden sunbeams! I saw in it no withering flowers, no lengthening shadows.

At last sleep insensibly stole over me, and then I dreamt of my mother. I thought she was sitting by me, as she used to do, and talking to me as she only could talk. Once more I seemed to hear those sweet lips calling me by my name. "Mary," I thought she said. "Mary, Mary!" again said a voice; but I started, for this time it was not like her's, and I felt a hand laid on my shoulders. I looked up, and saw my sister standing by my bed, her face pale as death. "What is the matter?" I exclaimed; "why are you here? and you look so frightened; *what* is it?" Tears were coursing down Lilian's pale cheek, but she answered not. "Speak!" I cried; "how can you torture me thus?"

"Mary," she said, "a messenger has arrived from Newton." How that short sentence froze my very life-blood! Dizzy, trembling with a horrible undefined terror, I could only gasp "Edward!" Lilian folded me in her arms. "My dear sister," she said, "may God give you strength to bear it; he is ill and wishes to see you." Who can

tell the agony of that moment? he was ill, he might die! Oh, that I had wings to fly to him! Friends crowded around me, offering encouragement and consolation, but their words fell unheeded on my ear. Ever I seemed to hear but *his* voice calling me. With feverish haste I dressed. Kindly they assisted my trembling fingers; tearfully they followed me to the carriage, and, with Lilian at my side, we drove away.

The grey dawn was breaking when we reached Newton House. Groups of weeping, terrified servants, stood in the hall. "How is Mr. Douglas?" asked Lilian of one of them, for my parched tongue refused its utterance. "Oh, ma'am, he is no better!" sobbed the poor woman; "but I am so glad you are come, for all night he has been asking me for Miss Murray." "Take me to him," I said, hoarsely.

All through the hours of that May morning I sat beside his dying bed. Fever had wrought its terrible work, and, for a time he knew me not; but, ere the messenger came, when the feeble flame was just flickering in the socket, reason returned. "Mary," he said faintly, taking my hand in his, "this was to have been our marriage day; but I go to the marriage supper of the Lamb." I bowed my head in anguish. "Oh, Edward," I cried, "you cannot, will not, leave me, it is more than I can bear!"

"You will come to me, my beloved. I have long prayed for you, Mary, and He who is faithful *will* answer." Wearily he sunk upon his pillow. I flung myself on my knees. Even at the eleventh hour there might be hope; but it was in vain. "The silver cord was loosed;" and faintly murmuring, "Even so, Father," with his hand in mine, he passed away.

For weeks and months I lay upon a bed of sickness, and one which many thought would be to me a bed of death. In my sin, I wished it might be so; but God dealt very mercifully with me. The "Sun of Righteousness" arose with healing on His wings, and the darkness and the shadows fled away. Slowly, but surely, the Spirit wrought its blessed work. His prayer was answered. Jesus took me into His fold—the fold of the tender Shepherd.

I am old now, my hair is gray, and my feet are trembling on the brink of the grave; but I can look back through the long vista of years, and thank the Lord for that dreadful dispensation. Yes; I

can say, it was well; well for him who so soon entered the peaceful haven—well for me that my idol was shattered. Oh, ye afflicted ones, tossed with tempest and not comforted, kiss the rod, for it is very precious! Thick and heavy the blows may fall, but they are all dealt by a Father's hand, whose name is Mercy. And oh, slight not that Father's chastisements, but pray that they may bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Then, when all sorrow and crying are ended—when, in the “sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,” you meet your loved ones once more, how joyfully shall you exclaim, “Truly the Valley of Achor was a door of hope.”

EARTH'S RESURRECTION-DAY.

EARTH'S resurrection-day is the opening of the most distant vista through which, even by revelation, we are permitted to gaze. But mortal eyes are too dim to penetrate the dazzling light that there beams. It is the day after the Creator's Sabbath, the commencement of a new era, of a new life, of a new manifestation of the perfections of the Godhead—of perfections which are now, perhaps, as incomprehensible as was justice, before Satan fell, or mercy, before man was saved. It shall then be seen that, in their Divinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all One, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. God shall be all in all; yet we believe that the glorified man, Christ Jesus, shall remain One with His Church, not by the humiliation of Himself, but by the exaltation of His people. It is a mystery which we cannot comprehend. It is a love which we cannot conceive. Yet Scripture plainly reveals the everlasting oneness of Christ and His chosen, and the new heavens and new earth as the prepared place, that where He is, there His people may be. Man, in the image of God, is the apex of Creation; man, one with God, is the vanishing line of redemption.

Fellow-Christians, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God? Yes, seeing that we look for such things, let us be diligent, that we be found of Christ in peace, without spot, and blameless.

SIN IN A BABY'S HEART.

A STORY FOR MOTHERS.

"So pure, so innocent, so fair,
Surely no taint of sin is there."

THUS sang a youthful aunt while swaying a lovely child of just two years' old, back and forward on her lap. She had only arrived the day before at the home of her brother and sister, and it was new and very pleasant to her to have a little niece of her own to fondle.

"Ah! Bertha, do you still know so little of human nature, as to think, because a little child is beautiful, and for the most part amiable and sweet, it is pure in heart?"

"Dear sister," replied Bertha, "I know the tendency to sin is here, and perhaps before long it may show itself; but you cannot convince me that this fair Lily is actually a sinner already."

"Here, baby," said the mother, anxious to withdraw the attention of the child, "come and build a castle at this end of the room, before nurse comes." The little one was soon intent upon her building, with six small books, which she was allowed to use instead of bricks when in the drawing-room.

Her mama then returned to her sister, and spoke in a low voice. "I fear you will not be long among us, without seeing cause to change your opinion. About three weeks ago we had a proof of the pride of our poor little Lily's heart, which I was hardly prepared to see in such an infant. You know how fond her papa has been of treating his little friends with dates ever since his stay in the East, and of describing the feathery palm-tree on which they grew. Well, baby has long known the drawer in which he keeps his date-box, and it is her especial treat after dinner every Sabbath, to have a large date when we go to the library, before the usual hymns are said and sung. She seemed not to have noticed our taking out the date-stone before; and, on this occasion, when, after she had nibbled her favourite fruit for a little while, still holding her on my knee, I took it, and removed the stone and offered it again, I was surprised to see her turn her little head away with an angry refusal. 'No, no,—baby no take date.' I offered it again, showing her that mama had only taken away the hard stone that would hurt baby, and left

the soft goody for her to suck ; but in vain. She did not like 'baby's date' to be interfered with, and, throwing it from her, she remained with her head sunk on her breast, and a mist in her eyes which she was too proud to allow to form into tears, till nurse came to carry her away. Her papa had not observed her, for a few minutes, engaged with the hymns which he had been singing, and which usually delighted her. He held up the broken date as she was leaving the room, thinking all was forgotten. But 'no, no good date—baby not 'ike date,' was the unexpected exclamation with which the offended little lady left the room. Her smiles had all returned when I went to hear her evening prayer. She recounted as pleasantly as usual the 'nice things kind Jesus gib' to baby ; gib' baby papa, gib' mama, gib' pochy (porridge), gib' mi'k, gib' dinner ;' then all at once, as the remembrance of what came after dinner came back to her, her brow clouded, and she added, 'but Jesus no gib 'baby good date.' I saw that there was still a sore spot in the little heart, but I got her to own she had been 'naughty baby' before I left her pillow. I believe she was sincere, as she quietly watched me taking out the stone, and received the date from me without a word." Aunt Bertha was beginning to express her surprise at such a proof of corruption from one scarcely two years of age, when another proof was unwillingly forced upon her, that Lily was not the *little angel* she thought her. She jumped up as nurse entered, tired of her quiet play, and glad to go in search of something more lively in the nursery. Her mama desired her to place the six books on the table. She refused, and crept below the table, to show her determination not to obey. On her mama repeating the order, nurse brought her again to the place where the books lay scattered. "*No I won't*," she said, and folded her fat arms before her. "*Must mama punish baby, or will she be good?*" "*No I won't*," was still the determined reply. Poor Aunt Bertha was then much dismayed to see a gentle chastisement administered to one so tender. The little arms dropped, and tears began to flow. Nurse, unwilling to prolong the struggle, hastily helped her to lift the books. Still it was evident that the rebellion of the little heart was not subdued, and that nurse had done more than half her share in fulfilling mama's command. After they left the room, mama remained distressed and dissatisfied on this account—feeling that a mere outward victory

was not enough, and how important and life-long a lesson of obedience, this might be were it duly learnt. She was not left long to indulge in this thought. The loving child could not long endure the absence of the sunshine to which she had been accustomed. She cried in the nursery, "Mama did not kiss her baby;" and nurse wisely restrained the longing she felt to dry her tears, and refused to kiss her or to take her in her arms, till she was an obedient child. At length she could bear up no longer, and running to the door, said, "I wi' be good, I wi' 'ift up the books." The doors were instantly opened. Nurse again placed the books on the floor, and promptly, in perfect silence, the little thing lifted one book after another, and, when all was done, threw herself sobbing on her mother's neck, exclaiming, "Mama wi' kiss her baby; baby's good now." Soon her sun was shining again, and it is hoped that baby will not forget the lesson of obedience then taught.

THE WAY TO BE SAVED.

"Do you know the way of being saved?" said I to a young friend, who appeared more in earnest than I had ever seen him.

"I think I do," said he.

"But are you sure that you know it, and that it is indeed the way, the very way, to the kingdom? A mistake here would be awful."

"I ought to know it well," he said, "for I was brought up religiously."

"Still you may, perhaps, not know it; for if you really knew it you would be something more than an inquirer."

"Yes, I do know the way, and I am doing my best to get into it—using all the means in my power. I hope in due time to succeed."

"What means are you using, may I ask?"

"I am reading, praying, and attending meetings, as well as church."

"You call these 'the best you can,' and 'means;' what are they means to?"

"Means, of course, to obtain from God faith and repentance."

"What makes you call these things means?" said I, "Has God prescribed them as such, or as preliminaries to repentance? When the jailer asked Paul, 'What must I do to be saved?' did Paul say,

‘Go and use the means;’ or did he not say, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?’ ”

“Well,” said he, “but am I to give up the use of these means?”

“For what purpose do you use them?” I asked.

“I cannot believe or repent of myself, and therefore I must do what I can to induce God to give me faith and repentance.”

“Is He, then, unwilling to give you faith at once; or will your using these means incline Him to do what otherwise He would be disinclined to do? Is your object to make God willing to bless you?”

“This is not the way in which I should put it; but, I suppose, your way of putting it is so far correct,” said he, reluctantly.

“Yes, it is correct. You think yourself quite willing, and you are labouring hard to make God as willing as yourself. This is the exact sense of *using the means* for the end you have in view.”

“But you know I *cannot* believe.”

“I know that nothing but the direct Omnipotence of the God that made heaven and earth can make you a believing man. That, however, is not the real question between us. It is not as to the *cannot* but as to the use to be made by you of this *cannot*. Are you using it as God would have you to do?”

“Yes; for am I not trying to secure the forth-putting of Omnipotence on my behalf?”

“Perhaps so,” said I; “but it is in your own way that you are doing so.”

“What do you mean?” he asked, earnestly.

“I mean this, first of all, that you are using the means respecting this *cannot* with no proper sense of its hideous meaning and hellish hatefulness; I mean, again, that you are using these means *unbelievingly*, and persist in going to God as a hard Master, whose willingness at this moment to bless you is a very doubtful thing, and whose gifts you can only secure by bribing the Giver with a long course of *deliberately unbelieving prayers*. Your spiritual impotency is surely but a poor excuse for such deliberate persistence in unbelief; do you seriously suppose that God will give to unbelief that which He has promised to faith; or that unbelieving prayer, if only persisted in for a sufficient length of time, will overcome His unwillingness, and turn Him into a friend? Do you think that a year’s using of the

means in this way will induce God to give you any one thing which He is not *at this very moment infinitely willing* to do? Such an unbelieving 'use of means' is far more likely to provoke God to refuse you altogether,—especially if so resolutely persisted in for months and years. Your unbelieving prayers were bad enough in your unconverted state, but they are far worse now, when God has so graciously touched you, and called you, and beckoned you to Himself. Ah, surely if you are shut up to anything, it is to *Faith*—immediate and unhesitating. Believe and be saved. This is God's way. Put nothing between you and faith; nothing between you and God.

FAITH AND THE FINISHED WORK.

By *faith* we find everything done. It is only to believe. Faith produces all manner of fruit in us; there is wondrous power in it, but still, it is only to believe, that is all. Just as though you had been deeply in debt, and some kind friend had paid the amount, and when that was *done*, had sent you word. The person comes and tells you that your debts are paid, and you believe it. Now your believing produces joy and gladness, doubtless, in your heart, but, of course, it does not in any measure go to liquidate the debt. So as to salvation. The debt *has* been paid, Christ *has* finished the work, and the believing soul enters into all the blessed results. Faith is exercised upon that which has been already accomplished. "It is of faith, that it might be by grace, that the promise might be true to all the seed." Nothing redounds to the glory of the creature. It is a person simply depending upon the *truth of God*.

A LEAF FROM THE TREE OF LIFE.

THERE is in the East a tradition, that a leaf from the tree which overshadows the tomb of a celebrated musician will communicate to the voice the sweetest melody. A leaf from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God, will impart melody to the words and to the actions.—"*Home Light*." By Rev. W. T. Marsh.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

FREE NEVER-FAILING GRACE!

A Sermon

PREACHED ON TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 5TH, 1860,

BY THE REV. J. J. WEST, M.A.,

(Rector of Winchelsea, Sussex.)

AT ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, KING SQUARE, GOSWELL ROAD, LONDON.

"Sought out, a city not forsaken."—ISAIAH lxii. 12.

IN preaching the gospel it is essential, not only as a test of our own faithfulness, but also for the edification of those who hear us, that we discriminate and separate. The truth must separate. Jeremiah was only as God's mouth—as he "took forth the precious from the vile"—and mark me in this, not merely must we "take forth the precious from the vile" as regards the distinction betwixt church and world, but we must separate in the church itself by drawing the distinction in each child of God between the old and the new nature. It is a great blessing, my hearers, to stand up before you charged with the ministry of Christ's gospel, and with such a text as the one before me to declare the free grace doctrines of the Word.

"Sought out, a city not forsaken." Such was Isaiah's proclamation of the truth—so he described the state of the church.

Now, first of all, I, as a sound Church-of-England man, armed with my Articles on the one side, and God's Holy Word before me in the pulpit, insist on the fact, that God begins the work in the soul of every sinner whom he has everlastingly saved in Christ before all worlds. It must be so—it is so—and it shall be so. "In the beginning was the Word." The Holy Ghost works on and in the sinner so saved at the appointed set time. That Spirit, that blessed and glorious Person whose descent on the church at Pentecost we commemorated two Sundays ago.

"No sinner can be beforehand with thee,

Thy grace is preventing, almighty, and free."

"That word, "preventing," means, not as generally understood in the common and vulgar use of the term, to hinder or to stop a thing, but to go before—to be beforehand with—the same as in one of our collects—"Prevent us, O, Lord, in all our doings," &c. If this were not so we should never do anything acceptable in God's sight. He is "the Alpha and the Omega," "the beginning and the ending." "He openeth and no man shutteth—and shutteth and no man openeth." Man has no power. It is all God's work alone! He opens and no man shuts—and mark the other side of the picture—He shuts and no man can open. The truth may not be popular in this dangerous professing day, but it is the truth of the Bible, and thank God (however some unhallowed hands may wish and would attempt to alter it) it is also the teaching of England's church.

The Mother's Magazine. August, 1860.

I need not occupy my pulpit time by reading the article. It distinctly states that "the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength to good works and calling upon God," and that article stands founded on, and proved by, John vi. 44—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Well, then, where is the power in man? But look how complete is the machinery of God's grace (if I may venture such a term to illustrate the fact) for—"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Who was it that persecuted the Saviour? Who are they that now, in our day, persecute the people of his choice and love? It is a section of the same party. It was the Pharisee then; it is the carnal professor now; the modern Pharisee of 1860.

Now, to keep to the text I am preaching on—"Sought out, a city not forsaken." And first, "Sought out."

That is the fact concerning the church of God." She is "sought out." I have only to turn to Isaiah lxxv. 1—(words deeply stamped on my own heart, because years ago they were blest to me when plucked from the errors of Arminianism)—"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." Is there a freewiller here? Do you dare, as I read these words out of the Bible, to contradict their truth? "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not." Where is there any creature-doing in what they declare? "I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name."

And, if again, I turn to that blessed Scripture and parable in Luke xv. 4—"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness"—(there is the place, "in the wilderness," where his sheep are, as therein described; and you and I are in the wilderness, too; bless God if he has shown you that this world is a wilderness)—"and go after that which was lost, until he find it. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." "My sheep." Mark that pronoun, how personal it is—"My sheep." One, for whom he died! One, for whom he shed his precious blood! Also, "my sheep which was lost." I cannot emphasize that word emphatically enough—"My sheep which was lost;" and bless God for another Scripture—"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And just, like the Master, so the servant; I am only sent—and every faithful minister is only sent—to particular persons—to the poor, and the broken in heart, to the prisoners, "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Again, "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it." Woman like) if I may so express it), leaving no stone unturned to accomplish her purpose, sweeping the house, and seeking diligently. "And when she hath found it, she calleth friends and neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me for I have found the piece which I had lost."

It is the striking thought of Augustus Toplady (and I thank him for it in my own soul), that that word in Luke xv. 10—"Likewise, I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth"—establishes the grand and glorious doctrine of final perseverance. "Because," he says (or words to the same effect), "such joy could not be felt in heaven amongst the heavenly host if it

were possible for the repenting sinner on earth, at whose repentance they were rejoicing, ever to be finally in hell. They rejoice over the sinner so repenting knowing that he could not have repented if he had not been elected; and that as surely as he was elected, so surely shall he be glorified."

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

They are more happy than you, poor sinner, are now, on earth. You, now, have your crosses, your trials, your temptations; you are exercised with your sins, your lusts, your passions, and with some (it may be so) your falls. But, while the saints in glory are happier, they are not more secure than you, poor sinner, are. We are now tried, and troubled, and cast down; we may be persecuted for the gospel's sake, but if in Christ—if we have been "sought out," and found—if we have been brought back on the shepherd's shoulders—if joy has been had over us—if the heavenly host has been assembled—and the eye of heaven drawn out on any one poor trembling sinner deeply repenting of his sins here—if this be so—you are as secure for heaven, as if you now were there.

Not so happy, oh, no! "And I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Mark the character—"poor and afflicted;" and mark God's sovereignty—"They shall trust in the name of the Lord." You must do so, you cannot help it; you shall trust. Poverty and affliction bring you to this; Jehovah works by these. To be afflicted. To be made poor in a gospel sense is the work of God; and so, in spite of yourself, in spite of Satan, spite of all obstacles and enemies, you shall "trust in the name of the Lord." My brother Harris has said to me when he was exercised and tried, "I will trust, and not be afraid."

Well, now, those words "sought out," declare the gospel, and set forth the truth. They declare the way in which God works in his people—the beginning work in time, "sought out."

"Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God."

Naturally, we were all going away from God. That may be the case now with some hearing me—some here who have never yet been called to feel sin and to seek the Saviour. Oh, that it may please God now so to bless the preached Word, that by it he may now seek out some straying sheep, and that the proclamation of the gospel to-night from this pulpit may be with power and a blessing to some prodigal who has never known the truth before.

I can only preach; only declare the gospel. And as I "draw a bow at a venture," and address all sorts and conditions of men, old and young, man and woman, boy and girl; it is God and God only who can apply the Word with power. The commanded blessing must come from himself. I have no offers, no invitations to make, but this I declare, "Come unto me all that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But are you labouring under personal sin and guilt and corruption? Are you "heavy laden?" Do you sigh and groan under conflict and in the warfare between flesh and spirit? When does conflict begin? Listen!—

"When all this is done, and his heart is assured
Of the total remission of sins—
When his pardon is signed, and his peace is procured,
From that moment his conflict begins."

And hence, if you know what conflict really is; if you know anything about the warfare—"For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Then you have an evidence; a "token for good," that you have been "sought out," and you will be seeking after him who first "sought out" you; and you must wait on him for deliverance till he comes and sets you free.

What did you hear in the first lesson about affliction and correction? I see some before me here, in these pews, that have been tried. Tried in your family; tried in your domestic circles. Have these things been blessed to your souls? Has affliction and trial been so sanctified that you have been enabled to say, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting?" Has it made you, like Joseph, say, in that remarkable and striking Scripture that I was preaching on to my own home flock on Sunday—"For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." And therefore Joseph called the name of his second son "Ephraim," (which means "fruitful"). But I must not dwell on this, and would only say on it, that it forcibly shows how Joseph felt; how he set up an Ebenezer in the very naming of his child. You parents have an object often in the names you give your children—some particular name. I have heard of instances of calling a son in infancy, so-and-so, in the hope and with a view of getting some day a fortune from some one whose name he was to bear; but this is mere worldly and carnal prudence. But look at, and mark well, the feelings which influenced Joseph. His was no worldly cunning; oh, no! God had made him "fruitful in the land of his affliction," where he had been so deeply tried; where he had been so keenly exercised; but where, also, God had manifested himself so wonderfully to him in raising him to the exalted position he was in, in Egypt, where he was sent in so extraordinary a manner—to be the preserver of his venerable father, and of his brethren, who had wickedly sold him to the Ishmaelites. And is not this an eminent type of the antitypical Joseph—even the Lord Jesus Christ? Oh, how fruitful was he in the land of his affliction! Consider his eventful life from the period when he came from Mary's womb up to the moment when we view him in his agony hanging on the cross between two thieves. And all this agony, and all this affliction in order to finish the work God gave him to do; and to redeem his church from the curse of sin and a violated law. Joseph called his son "Ephraim;" of the Redeemer it is written—"And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

But I must now come to the second point of the text; and having Scripturally, I trust, set before you that Jehovah begins the work in each elect sinner, and seeks out each one at the appointed time, and that all the work is his own, I would now show that as the chosen sinner is "sought out" and called of God, so, also, such a sinner can never, shall never "be forsaken," nor cast off. The church is not only "sought out," but she is a "city not forsaken." Here, then, is the grand and glorious doctrine of the eternal safety of the elect in Christ: and you will observe, that the church is compared to a city. Now, you men in London, above all people, understand what citizenship means; what a corporate body signifies; you have your Lord Mayor, your officers, in their various grades, members of the corporation; and then the city has certain privileges! So the church, she is a city. "A city set on a hill which cannot be hid." But do you, my hearers, know? do you understand anything of the city and of citizenship therein of which I am preaching? Of the "city not forsaken?" I speak thus by way of illustration, to show what a city and citizenship implies. I will turn to a passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter iv. verses 4, 5, 6—"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." In that one body there is no division; no schism! It is "sought out;" it is a "city not forsaken." Is there one here present who would cavil at these things? I appeal "to the law and to the testimony;" my proof and my authority is in this Holy Book. Jehovah seeks out his people by effectual calling, and which must and does follow salvation. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," 2 Timothy i. 9. Salvation in eternity, before all worlds. Calling in time, at the decreed and appointed season. We are saved first, and therefore must be called. And that call is to command you to come out of the world—to call you to the knowledge of the truth—to a sense of guilt and sin—to call you to feel and experience what you never felt before. To realise to you trials, temptations, persecutions, harrassings; and hence to have to endure the enmity, and hatred, and contempt of a gospel-hating world. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."—Or, as I believe it may be rendered—"according to the measure, or the degree in which Christ gives it." God may see fit for a time to withhold his grace—to leave his child for a time—but never finally to forsake any poor sinner for whom Christ died—"a city not forsaken." Experimentally you may often feel as if you were. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." Remember how Christ suffered agony, and the climax of that agony was probably when he cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" What suffering, what agony must then have thrilled through the Redeemer! But "Why, why?" was he forsaken? Why was he thus left? "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." That shows the reason "why." It was that he might be a sympathising Saviour with each one of his church—that he might comfort, and feel for and with each tried and mourning (and as it were) deserted soul; and hence it is that we wait at his feet, look up to him for help, and long for that which Dr. Hawker used to call, "a visit from Jesus." Do you know what it is to expect the visit of a friend and to be disappointed if he does not come? or to call upon a friend and find him out? And yet such is the experience of the church. But Christ manifests himself afterwards at his own set time of favour; and hence the position of the church is continually a waiting position. She is waiting. "Wait, I say, on the Lord;" you heard that in the first Psalm for the evening, in the desk. Now, is not this cheering intelligence to the church that she is not forsaken? or, I think I am not straining it, when I say, she can never be damned. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace." If you were under that law printed over the communion table behind me, and quoted from the Bible, that law seals your condemnation. It is our school-master unto Christ. It demands the most implicit and perfect obedience. The poor child of God knows and says I cannot so obey, and then is constrained to—

"Fly to the hope the gospel gives,
The man that trusts the promise lives."

And yet the man who holds this doctrine is the only obedient man. The Arminian heresy is all drudgery and taskwork. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Here is the test, and that blessed and glorious passage in the Epistle to the Romans, "Sin shall not have dominion over you," comforts and encourages the poor. But do you know what it is to be under its dominion? Do you know what it is to feel its power? Do you know what temptation is? Do you know what it is to be harrassed

by the depravity of a vile and sinful heart? and as my brother minister said to me before I came into his church this evening, "Oh, poor human nature!" Those words from his tongue made me cry out in silence, "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe." We were speaking of a man who had fallen into wretchedness and sin. What did it prove? The frailty and weakness and depravity of poor human nature. Ah, my hearers, we are too apt to cut one another all to pieces. Look at Christ; look at him; where should I stand, and where would you stand (if we are his people) if it was not for the mercy of God in his dear Son? and hence let us practically bear in mind those great words of Paul to the church at Galatia, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

It is not too common a sentence for the place I occupy, and I may quote a saying once addressed to me by one of my home hearers (and who is now, I believe, a saint in heaven) "Oh, Sir, grace has emptied your pocket and mine of stones;" we dare not throw a stone; and remember, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," John viii. 7. Well might the faithful Ruth, in the corn-field of Boaz drop on her face in self-abasement, and exclaim, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" Ruth ii. 10. How discriminating is the grace of God! But the point here is, "a city not forsaken." The church is safe, because saved; and if you are members of the church—of the church, which, in the words of the New Testament, "He hath purchased with his own blood," if we are of that blood-bought family, then we are "a city not forsaken." I cannot now quote the words, but I caught the same idea, in the hymn that was just now given out, and sung, as to "the eye of the Saviour." Jehovah never will finally forsake his people. He may hide, he may withdraw his presence from time to time, and we then know what darkness, deadness, and rebellion is. And then, when so left, we err and stray like a lost sheep—as, indeed, we have confessed just now in that blessed confession prayer at the opening of our service. But did we feel those words? or was it mere mockery in saying, "We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep—we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts?" I say, did we feel and really mean what we confest? And again, when at another time we say, "That it may please thee to give us true repentance, to forgive us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances, and endue us with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to thy Holy Word, we beseech thee to hear us good Lord." Does every churchman—every professing churchman feel that, and really understand it? or is it merely lip-service? Is sin felt, and therefore repentance really cried for? Joseph, remember, was made "fruitful in the land of his affliction." Oh, my hearers, we are guilty sinners—"We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders. Spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults. Restore thou them that are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There is the Shepherd of Israel—the restorer of, the seeker out of his own sheep. Mark this, as exemplified in families; in a parish; in a community—"One taken and another left." "He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts." "He openeth and no man shutteth. He shutteth and no man openeth." O! yes, it is the truth. The church is "sought out, a city not forsaken." May this truth be fastened on and in your hearts. God will never leave, never forsake his people. Oh, the

mercy of knowing and living on that truth. Are you "sought out?" Are you a husband? Has God sought you out, and not "sought out" your wife? Or, are you a wife, and are you "sought out," and your husband not? Or are you a father—a mother—a son, or a daughter? Or are you the only one in your family circle called to believe in Jesus? Then you know what it is to say, "Why me, why me, Lord?" Grace always discriminates; this is the Gospel? We are living in a day of excitement, and when much stress is laid on creature-doings; but, my hearers, God begins the work, carries on the work so begun, finishes the work. He makes the "new creature." The old Adam cannot be patched up—"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh," Ezekiel xxxvi. 26. No "change," of heart, mind that; if so there could be no conflict between the two natures. Look at that remarkable instance in the parable in Luke xv., how God wrought a work. How he "sought out" that poor, erring, sinning prodigal, and forced him to exclaim—"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants," Luke xv. 18, 19. Then mark the grace—"a city not forsaken." The eye of his father had been on him still, as Kent says in that remarkable hymn—

"Preserved in Jesus,
When my feet made haste to hell,
And there should I have gone,
But thou dost all things well:
Thy love was great, thy mercy free
Which from the pit delivered me."

There is love to the church! The Christian is no better than another man; it is grace which makes the difference. Let me turn to 1 Corinthians, chap. v.—"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." But remember how the Paschal lamb was to be eaten—"with bitter herbs they shall eat it." And look at the church, continually in trial. It is affliction, it is soul-exercise that makes Christ precious.—It is when exercised under doubts and fears. Not doubting about the truth; but in this way, "Am I in Christ? did he die for me? did Christ shed his blood for me? am I one of his own people?" I heard to-day of a Christian father exercised and sorely grieving over a dying daughter. He loves his child; she is sinking; he dreads the parting, but he says—"If I could only see her feeling her lost state as a sinner, and hear her cry to God through Christ for mercy, and thirsting for his precious blood, I could then resign her cheerfully." Now this is a sore trial to him. One of the troubles of the way. "Be still, and know that I am God." Ministers of the gospel must insist on this. "We have this treasure in an earthen vessel." The power is of God alone; if you have been "sought out" you will be seeking him. It has been well observed, "To be a seeker is to be of the best sect next to being a finder." None ever really sought after Christ with a broken heart and failed to find him. "Sought out, a city not forsaken."

Since I was last here I understand that one who used to attend these monthly Tuesday evening services, and to whom, I believe, my feeble instrumentality has been blessed, is now no more. I believe he was here a month ago, sitting in this house of prayer. He (so I understand) exemplified the truth of the words I am preaching on, "Sought out, a city not forsaken." He died, I hear, in faith. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And before all was over he requested that the burial service of our church might be read

at his bedside, and he declared that every word in that service might be truly applied to him whenever his corpse was deposited in the grave. This is a solemn subject. This day month that man was occupying a seat in one of those pews. How will it be in July, should I be spared to come then? How, as it regards each one of you? Are you "sought out." "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them," Rev. xiv. 13. Look at that burial service when you get home, and instead of finding fault with it as some do, see whether it applies to you, and if it does not may my hint be to you the means of making you cry mightily to God. Now think of that! you may be gone, I may be gone; these Tuesday evening services may never occur again. The point is—"Am I fit to die?" Are you fit to die? That is between God and your own souls. What is the fitness?—

"All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him."

And you my hearers, that have lately lost those you love (you know to whom I speak) when you go home to-night and see the vacant chair, look at your own and say, That may be vacant in a day or in an hour—

"Oft as the bell, with solemn toll,
Speaks the departure of a soul,
Let each one ask himself, am I
Prepared, should I be called to die?"

And I can't help before I stop referring to the state of the "fitness" of a sinner in Hart's hymn—

"Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream,
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him,
This he gives you,
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

"Sought out, a city not forsaken." May God impress these great words upon your minds. May the preaching be much blest? May sinners be laid low in the dust of self-abasement. May God in Christ be exalted as our "all and in all."

May these six words be a large and a lasting text in your hearts, "Sought out, a city not forsaken." May "I, less than the least of all saints, have grace given that I may still preach among you (London) gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ;" and may you be made to see and realize for a dying bed and a dying hour, whether what I now ask you in all faithfulness is true; whether you have been "sought out;" and then, if so, you shall never be "forsaken." "Sought out, a city not forsaken." God bless the Gospel for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Sketches and Essays.

BITTER TEARS, AND HOW TO ESCAPE THEM.

At an early hour, one autumn morning, I received intelligence that my only sister, who had for some time past been in a delicate state of health, was much worse, and longed greatly to see me. Having completed some hasty arrangements, I set out on my very painful journey. Many and mingled were my reminiscences as I pursued my solitary way. Thoughts of our early childhood, spent together amid almost unbroken happiness; of our school days and girlhood, the sunshine and shade of which had been so truly sympathized in by each; thoughts such as these flitted rapidly across my mind. Then, too, came the recollection of Lucy's marriage—of the almost agony of mind it had cost me to give up my place in her heart's love to another—and of the grace, which, in answer to earnest prayer, had been given me, in my sad trial.

I recalled, too, the joy which had thrilled through every fibre of my being, on discovering that I still retained my old nook in her heart, that she loved me as truly as before, and that her husband shared the affection with her. Then came the memory of happy days spent at "The Cedars," in the society of my best loved ones on earth; and the tide of anguish swept over my soul, as the apprehension rose in my mind that, possibly, my last days of joy had been spent there, and that a cloud of sorrow, if not of death, was about to darken that happy home. In the midst of such suspense and anxiety, it was a blessed thing to know that the sufferer herself had a sure resting-place for her never-dying soul. In her early youth she had unreservedly given herself to Jesus, and now she could trust Him, Who had been the portion of her life, to be her "guide even unto death."

It was late on the following afternoon when I arrived at "The

The Mother's Magazine. September, 1860.

Cedars." My brother-in-law hastened to meet me, and, in answer to my agitated inquiries, told me, as calmly as he could, that all hope of my beloved sister's recovery was now at an end, and that the doctor had told him that her weakness was now so great, she might at any moment pass away.

"She has repeatedly asked for you, Fanny," he added; "and oh!" he groaned, as we proceeded to Lucy's room, "what a meeting—what a parting yours will be!"

Another moment, and we had softly and noiselessly entered the chamber of death.

I approached the bed. Lucy opened her eyes. A smile, a bright smile, lighted up her pallid face; and, stretching towards me her thin small hand, she said faintly, "Dear, dear Fanny, how glad I am you have come—in time. I shall soon be away—soon be with Jesus; and I wanted so much to see your face once more, and to commit all my precious ones to your care!" I pressed her hand, while I faltered out, "I will try, my own Lucy, I will try." She turned her eyes upon her husband, and successively upon each of her children, who were gathered, in speechless grief, round their mother's dying bed; and then, for the first time, I looked towards my young nieces and nephews. The sight was a heart-rending one; and the profound sorrow which sat upon each youthful face overwhelmed my spirit. As my eyes fell upon Florence, the second eldest girl, they remained riveted upon her. What a cloud of grief was there! Yet there was something more than grief upon her countenance, as she kept her position close by the side of her mother; and there was an expression of bitterness, intense bitterness, such as I had never before witnessed in one so young. She seemed scarcely able to breathe, lest she should disturb her mamma; and she drank in every word that fell from the revered lips, as if they were life to her heart. Her eyes were red and swollen with weeping. She had shed many tears; and many she had still to weep. I shall tell you, dear young friends, the cause of her anguish.

Naturally of a self-willed, impetuous temper, Florence had caused both parents much concern and distress. As a child, they strove, by the mingling of judicious tenderness and correction, to curb the risings of what threatened to be a proud rebellious spirit. But, as she sprang into girlhood, and got, or at least erroneously fancied herself to be getting somewhat beyond the control of her friends,

her self-will seemed really to grow with her stature and to strengthen with her vigour and bloom. She saw the grief which her behaviour caused her parents, especially her gentle, affectionate mother; but she paused not, she considered not; and, heedless of the thorns she was, with her own hand, planting in her path, she rushed forward in her career of self-will. One of her mamma's chief sources of anxiety, in regard to Florence, was the intimacy which she had formed, and persisted in cultivating, with Gertrude Lee, the daughter of a neighbouring proprietor.

Gertrude, although a good-tempered girl, was an ill brought up one, and extremely unprincipled, and all her pursuits and amusements were of the most silly, frivolous kind. Aware of the pernicious effects which such an example was likely to exert over Florence, her mamma, finding that remonstrance and advice on the subject were quite unavailing, tenderly but decidedly forbade the intimacy, assuring Florence that nothing but her own good could impel her to a course which would cause her child pain or disappointment. Florence, in reply, made some ungracious remarks, to the effect that she was no longer a child to be tied to apron-strings, and that it was very hard such a sentence should be passed in regard to the only real friend she possessed, or would ever care to have.

Nor was this all; for, unknown to her parents, Florence did keep up her intimacy with Gertrude secretly, both by correspondence and clandestine meetings. All this time she was, as might be expected, very wretched and unhappy; and often the love and kindness of her unsuspecting mother went as a knife to her heart. The state of my sister's health, which, for several months past had been delicate, but not so much so as to excite apprehension, did not prevent the young people from occasionally paying visits to their friends; and it was with real satisfaction that, at this time, her mamma accepted an invitation given to Florence, by a friend in Edinburgh, that she should spend a few weeks with her in town. Besides being pleased at the anticipated enjoyment the visit would afford Florence, my sister fondly hoped that a favourable change might be produced on her spirit and temper, and that she might return to that home which, to all the others of the family, was such a sweet and happy one, less peevish and self-willed than she now quitted it. She was quite unconscious, in the midst of her hopeful anticipations, that, at the earnest solitation of Florence, Gertrude had managed to get an

invitation to visit a family in Edinburgh, and that all arrangements were being made for a constant, and, as the girls themselves expressed it, "an unrestrained communion of hearts and sympathies."

During the first few weeks they spent in town, they were almost inseparable; and, on the part of Florence, the friendship was deep and sincere. Towards the close of the visit, however, her eyes were opened to discover the true character of her, for the sake of whom she had sacrificed so much principle and peace, and for the enjoyment of whose society she had sown the seeds of an agonising remorse, from the effects of which she will never, to her dying day, be delivered.

Gertrude, who had found it very convenient and pleasant at home to be the acknowledged friend and confidant of Florence, now found it would be more to her advantage to cultivate an intimacy with some young ladies who had an avowed dislike to Florence, which on her part, was but too intensely reciprocated. From their position and style, Anna and Susan Hay were useful and helpful to Gertrude in the ambitious aims and plans she was forming; and, with a cool calculation, much more befitting the wily politician than a girl of seventeen, she resolved, with heartless indifference, to relinquish the society of Florence for that of her new and fashionable friends. Florence was slow at first to believe in the reality of the change in Gertrude; but, ultimately, the painful conviction was forced upon her mind, that her place in what she now saw to be the cold, feeble, affections of Gertrude, was supplanted by others. The discovery filled her with profound and bitter grief; and, just as she was resolving to announce her intention of quitting her friend's house, she received letters telling her of her mamma's increased weakness and illness, and urging her to return immediately home.

Greatly alarmed at the unexpected intelligence, Florence left Edinburgh, to return home. During the journey, she read over the previous letters she had received from her sisters, and was shocked to discover how frequently mention had been made of the increased languor and debility of her beloved mamma. "I was blind, absolutely blind, to all but the one object," she mentally exclaimed, "and how miserably deceitful it has proved!" To her the marked change in her mamma's appearance was much more evident and alarming than to those who had been constantly beside her, and she felt sure that death was upon those soft and lovely features. Her

kind sisters did all they could to comfort her; and her mamma, to whom she unbosomed her whole course of deceit, and sin, seemed more tenderly affectionate and gentle than before. A full and free forgiveness was gladly given by the mother to her repentant child; and the knowledge of the softened change, so manifest in her daughter, gave comfort and gladness to my dying sister. But Florence, poor, poor Florence, nothing, and no one, seemed to comfort her. Her punishment, she said, was greater than she could bear, and her spirit sank beneath the oppressive load.

Her mamma was never able to rejoin the family circle—never again well enough to undertake the charge of her family and house. Thus Florence felt that all opportunity, all happy privilege of testifying, by altered conduct, her cheerful and filial obedience to her mamma's commands and wishes, was for ever gone.

"Tears will not bring the loved one back
To our glad home again,
Else should my life's blood weep them now;
But no; 'tis vain! 'tis vain!"

Such was the language of Florence's heart. True, she waited upon her mamma with an assiduous devotion and tenderness unsurpassed by that of any of her sisters; yet, while such behaviour yielded a present melancholy satisfaction, it softened not the sting of remorse; it obliterated not the dark, gloomy memory of bygone disobedience and sin.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, on one occasion, to her sisters, "*what would I give to have your feelings this day!*"

Such, my dear young readers, was the secret of the floods of bitter tears, and of the deep gloom and grief which, as I have said, were depicted on the countenance of Florence, as she sat by the side of her dying mother. Longer in the chamber of death we linger not, for now the last words have all been spoken, the last fond looks have all been cast; and she, upon whose pale lips we stoop to press our own, has passed away; yes, passed away from time into eternity, from earth's vale of tears to the land of pure delight—

"Where all is incorruptible and pure,
The joy without the pain, the smile without the tear."

Florence was borne fainting from the room, and laid upon her own

bed, which proved to her one of long and severe sickness. As she slowly began to show signs of recovery, it seemed as though she only waked to weep. . . . The tearful cloud still hangs over the horizon of her life; and though, at intervals, the sun does break through the gloom of her spirit, it is but a fitful gleam, which is soon again o'ershadowed and dimmed by the tears of unalloyed remorse.

Dear young friends, may this brief little sketch of Florence act as a warning to you. Remember the commandment, "Children, obey your parents," is of Divine origin, and cannot, with impunity, be transgressed. Esteem it, then, not only a sweet and happy privilege towards your earthly parents, but a duty to your Father in heaven, to exercise filial affection and dutiful obedience; and do it now, even although your wishes may be crossed, and your inclinations thwarted; now, while, it may be, one or both parents are yet spared to you; so may you escape the bitter tears, and the heart-anguish and remorse, which crushed and blighted the spirit of the youthful Florence.

LITTLE GEMS FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

1. GIVE God your heart; for He asks it, and it is His due.
2. Give Christ your sins to bear; for no one but Christ can bear them.
3. Give Christ your burdens to carry; for they are too heavy for you.
4. Give yourself to God, to Father, Son, and Spirit—the three-one-God.
5. Give all you have to God—your body and your soul, your time, your health, and your money, your hands, and feet, and eyes, and lips.
6. Give your heart and soul to the Holy Spirit to be made clean and new.
7. Give praise and thanks to the Lord, day and night; for He deserves it all, and it is the least that you can give Him for His love and His gifts to you.

LIVE FOR JESUS.

A WORD TO OUR DAUGHTERS.

SOME laughed, because the gay Virginia Barry called herself a Christian; some were sorry, but none doubted that it was genuine.

A few weeks later, Virginia sat by her glowing grate in the evening. Pleasant were her thoughts.

"I am satisfied now," she murmured softly, "I'm satisfied that I am happy, truly happy. I no longer hate to live; I feel as though I were living for something. Yes, I have a grand aim, and my motto shall be 'Do good.' And the smile of Jesus is so sweet to me! I feel He loves me, and I know I love Him. All that I do, I do from love to Him. Yes, I am happy, blessed be His holy name, and I trust I shall be happy in the glorious Beyond. I am not worthy of it; I am not worthy to work for Him; yet what I find to do I will do it with all my heart, mind, and strength. I thank Him that He has shown me the way of life; and I pray that I may walk humbly in His footsteps, that I may live holily, even as He did."

Reader, are you satisfied? Does life seem sweet? Are you happy? Does your heart cling to life's gaieties, or do you feel "all is vanity?" Love Jesus! Do good! Let your life praise Him! Remember all that He has done for you; all He bore; think of His dying agonies! Go to Him. Tell Him all your sorrows. See, He sympathizes with you! His love is *infinite*! Then cling to Jesus.

Better than gold of Ophir, better than diamonds of Peru, better than sparkling rubies, and sweeter than all earth can give, is Jesus' love.

This world has many pleasures, and 'tis a beautiful world, with its azure canopy pinned with stars, its tall, waving trees, its green grass or snowy carpet of nature's weaving, with its flowers of richer than Tyrian dye, its sweet, gorgeous, perfumed blossoms, with its "winged flowers," those dear, little humming birds, its hills and its valleys, its nooks and niches, its woods and prairies, moors and forests; oh, yes! 'tis a beautiful world, and its pleasures are many. But, delighted with their beauty, you grasp them, and, like the Dead Sea apples, they turn to ashes in your grasp.

No, they cannot satisfy. Young lady, the world seems sweet to you, with its joy and gaieties, but *sometimes* you are unsatisfied.

Why? It is your spirit's cry for something nobler, purer, better. Heed it!

Young man, absorbed in business, or with, "nothing to do," you, too, are often unsatisfied, and you would turn with loathing from the scenes you love; you are sometimes sad without apparent cause, sometimes oppressed, feeling burdened—though such hours with you may be few, they are given you that you may turn to Jesus. Love Him!

Mother, father, children, all feel "unsatisfied," oftentimes, but the love of Jesus satisfieth for evermore. Love Him, I entreat of you! And the little trials of life shall never harm you, and the larger ones shall leave you unscathed, for the "Rock of Ages" shall be your defence; He shall be your fortress, your strong tower, your shield and buckler.

And when the night of life comes on, and you grow weary, gently He'll lead you down the valley, so that you "fear no evil," and the light of His love shall shine on your struggling spirit, and the valley shall only be dark enough for you to see the glory "across the river."

Like the beautiful sunlight shall your dying hour be; His love shedding a light stronger than aught else, and overpowering the darkness of death.

Let your life then be a hymn in His praise. Live a hymn! A sweet hymn, whose melody shall touch many a heart, Let your thoughts, words, professions, and actions join in one grand, glorious harmony, and the melody thereof shall float up to Jesus' throne, and, mayhap the angels shall pause to listen.

And hearts around you, sad, weary hearts shall grow lighter, and many a life shall be turned to just such harmony, if yours be. Try it! Don't mind if here's a discord, there a false note played, but do the best you can, and no matter who you are, your living anthems shall be sweet to Him who loves us.

Young and gay, bright and joyous, mirthful, perhaps calling yourselves happy; do you love Jesus? O love Him, ere the dark hour comes, dark to you, if you love Him not.

Ye weary, fainting, hungering, and thirsting, ye who have found the waters of Marah, and thirst longingly for the shady palm tree and the wells of Elim, turn, oh turn, to Jesus.

"He is all things to all men." Just what you need. Love Jesus! Do good! LIVE FOR JESUS!

THE TWO BROTHERS.

A TRUE STORY FOR OUR BOYS.

ABOUT sixty-six years ago, in one of the prettiest cities of Switzerland, there lived an old professor and his wife. He was a very learned man, or "the great scholar," as everybody called him, and a wit withal, always ready to say something funny, and trying all the time to bottle up life with a laugh. The wife was a gentle, kind-hearted, and loving woman—the friend of the poor, and a true Christian. They had two sons, their only children. In those days people did not live so extravagantly as they do now. It was then even considered an evidence of good sense to measure one's wants by one's means, instead of keeping up a false appearance of ease by an unwise contempt for honest and conscientious economy. The Professor and his wife had no fortune. A government pension, added to the interest money of a few bank stocks, the last remains of his wife's dowry, constituted all their income. It was, therefore, necessary that they should content themselves with much less elegance than their neighbours; yet they were very happy. Their pleasant house fronted a large square, in the midst of which stood a fountain. Mornings and evenings that fountain was encircled by a merry, chatting crowd of men and women, but mostly women, who came with buckets on their heads to get water. One side of the square was planted with tall horse-chesnut trees, under which could be seen on market days, rows of old women selling fruit in summer, and in winter a few scanty, half frost-bitten, odourless rosebuds, mixed with evergreens. There the old women were always sure to be found, when it rained, sheltered by large blue cotton umbrellas; and when the weather was fine, and the sun made the leaves of the horse-chesnuds glisten like bits of gold, they might be seen sitting very composedly behind their round baskets, waiting for customers.

Close to the Professor's house stood the old cathedral, with its high towers and its beautiful stained windows. Under the massive shadow of that imposing pile the Professor's two sons, Louis and Valcreuse, had spent all the first years of their happy childhood, eagerly listening for the hours to strike when school was out and they were once more free. These two brothers loved each other very much, yet in a different way. One was like his mother,

unselfish, and constantly preoccupied with the comfort, the enjoyment, or the welfare of those around him; the other, though the eldest, had not such a noble and generous disposition. On the contrary, his sole preoccupation was *self*. All that he either did or wished to do, was in view of his own personal satisfaction. He never tried to give up his preferences, or even his boyish whims, for any one of his schoolmates, but exacted, with a sort of underhanded, ill-concealed tyranny, every possible sacrifice from them. The result was, that none of his companions loved him. How could they? Is there anything upon earth more repulsive than a selfish, disobliging boy?

Valcreuse was surrounded by his class-mates, the moment he entered school, or when they saw him on the play-ground. He was always so kind and so gentle. They did not know what made such a difference between the two brothers, for both were fine lads, high-spirited, and well-bred. But I will tell you. Valcreuse was a Christian. He truly loved God, and that Bible which God has given us as the mirror in which we dare gaze at Him; and many a time, even while he was at play with other boys, he would remember what he had read that morning before breakfast, in the Holy Book. No wonder, then, that he was so good. God never forgets to help and to aid the children who remember Him and choose Him for their best friend. Valcreuse had repeatedly tried to interest Louis in religious matters, but without success. Louis loved his brother well enough not to make fun of his piety, yet did not find in his own heart the least desire to share it. He liked playing at ball or at cricket far more than to read the Bible. Indeed, he thought it was enough to hear it read Sabbath after Sabbath at church, while he sat so motionless for more than one whole hour! Even then, however, Louis was not serious, for while the minister preached, instead of listening attentively, he would amuse himself by gazing at the floods of sunlight pouring through the stained windows, or looking at the shadows as they crept along the walls.

The Professor was very proud of his sons. They both were intellectual, fond of books, and inclined to study, for the hope of gaining a prize stimulated the ambition of the vain and thoughtless Louis. The hours they spent at home were usually divided between reading and preparing school duties for the following day.

When Louis had reached his thirteenth year, and Valcreuse was twelve years old, their father received the unexpected visit of an old

friend of his, a military man. The brothers were delighted at the chance they now had of listening to stories of battles and danger, and had never done asking a thousand questions. After a few weeks the officer received orders to join his regiment, and left the Professor's hospitable house. Before leaving, however, he wished to give the boys a little keepsake as a memorial of his visit; but not knowing what might or might not please them most, he presented each one with a sum of money, which they were to spend as they liked.

Then began a daily debate about the best investment of that money. Louis formed a thousand projects for spending it, in a manner that would please himself, of course. A few weeks from that time was to bring round the anniversary of his father's birthday; an occasion which was celebrated in the family, and gave the brothers the opportunity of saving beforehand some of their pocket money. But, heedless of all, Louis spent the whole of his money in confectionaries and cakes, and in one very inferior paint-box. So he came home in a great state of excitement one day, proudly showing his purchases to his brother.

"And what do you intend buying with your money, Valcreuse?" said he.

Valcreuse answered that he had not yet decided, but he meant to use it for giving pleasure to others, as he cared for money only because it could be made useful. And Louis laughed at what he called "incorrigible philosophy."

At last the birthday drew near. It was the afternoon before. Louis had not one penny left. He could not buy even a bunch of flowers to lay by his father's plate at breakfast. Valcreuse had his purse well filled, and with it the delightful consciousness of independent power which money gives to a generous mind. After consulting his darling mother, he decided upon getting for his father a nice fur-lined foot-muff. He knew that it would add greatly to the comfort of the scholar, while he sat for hours at his writing-table each day.

Just as he was going to make his purchase, thinking with delight of all the pleasure and surprise it would be to his father, he met Louis, who asked him where he was going. Valcreuse told him, and proposed that they should choose the wished-for article together. So both entered the shop, and after a careful examination of all the treasures it contained, a large and fine green morocco-covered foot-

muff, so commonly used by gentlemen in Europe, was selected. With what intense satisfaction Valcreuse paid his money and charged himself with the valuable bundle, clumsy as it was! But, poor boy! he did not dream then the sacrifice he would be called to make. Nor had he any idea that the deep pleasure, whose mere anticipation had been so full already, would be snatched from him, or rather displaced; for a noble nature like his learns to transform a personal privation into a conscious enjoyment, by rendering it the means of serving others.

When the shop door was closed, Louis began bitterly deploring that he had so thoughtlessly spent all his money. He felt very bad about it. He could not endure the idea that on the very next day he would not have a single thing to offer to his father, and that, too, through his own fault. Selfish to the end, and indifferent to the pain he might inflict, he boldly proposed to his brother to let *him* have the foot-muff, so that *he* might give it himself to their father. This was a hard moment for Valcreuse! Give up the muff! give up the pleasure of that surprise and comfort to his father! And what could he give then? Nothing! for every penny he owned had passed into the purchase of that one thing. Surely he never could let Louis have it! It was asking too much of his generosity, too much of his self-denial! At this very juncture, while poor Valcreuse was debating the difficult question, and feeling how really unjust it was, his tender conscience made him remember these words: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them," and at once the triumph was complete. Rendered strong for the sacrifice which these words gave him, he said, "Yes, Louis, you may have it. I only hope you will feel as much happiness in giving it to papa as I would have had myself."

The next morning, on entering the dining-room, the Professor found at his table two new objects: one, the showy and beautiful green foot-muff—looking still more brilliant and comfortable than the evening before; the other, simply a copy of Latin verses, neatly written, and tied by a bit of rose-coloured ribbon to a bouquet of wild-asters and fern leaves, the only remaining relics of the bygone summer, which Valcreuse had found in his early walk. Yet humble as the offering was, think you not that the noble and generous boy, who had had the courage to make it, was far happier than his selfish and ungenerous brother?

Valcreuse never breathed a word about his disappointments to any one. He did not even tell his dear mother, though her quick heart-instinct made her guess the truth. For months and for years the secret was kept, except from God, who had witnessed what it had cost; but a long time after, when Louis was very ill, he told his parents of Valcreuse's generosity, and not till then did he express his deep regret for his own heartless selfishness.

Which of the two brothers do you most admire?

THE LITTLE HOME MISSIONARY IN INDIA.

PULTENEY JOHNSTONE was the child of respectable parents, members of the congregation of which my husband was minister. He was one of the younger children of a large family, all of whom were trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He died in July, 1857, after a very short illness, and at the early age of five years and eight months. We were absent from home when this occurred; but, on visiting the house immediately after the little boy had breathed his last, my husband found that, even in the first bitterness of grief, there was a joy that sustained the sorrowing hearts, for the parents felt their loved one had only passed into a better world, and into a higher state of life than any on this earth. So many interesting facts regarding the little boy were mentioned, that one of the sisters was requested to write down all she could recollect, and from her narrative the following details are taken.

Little Pulteney learned the English language at a very early age. This is not generally the case with children in India—their first language being usually the dialect of that part of the country where they live. It was not so, however, with Pulteney; and, in consequence of his knowledge of English, he was able very soon to attend at, and join in, family worship, and, as his sister says, "It may be that this, through the grace of God, gave that bent to his mind, and that turn to his thoughts, from which we now derive so much comfort."

His sister continues: "His inquiries upon religious subjects were many, and often singularly judicious and discriminating, although, as might be expected in a child, couched in very plain language.

When learning prayers, he wanted an explanation of almost every word he repeated; and, when only two years old, he inquired what kind of a place heaven was. His own opinion ultimately settled down, that the beauties of the mansions above, or, in his own words, 'God's houses,' must be great beyond conception; that there must also be lovely and delightful gardens attached to those beautiful houses of the saints, and that the angels there must be exquisitely happy and joyous, singing hymns to the glory of God, and enjoying the delights of such a pretty place. To us, his sisters, he used often to point out that there is not a house in Calcutta to equal the houses in heaven. And corresponding with his love to heaven was my poor dear brother's dread of the 'bad place,' as he called hell, where, he said, all naughty children would be sent. Before he was three years old, he knew the little hymn, beginning 'Tis religion that can give,' and took great pleasure in repeating it.

"Hymns he seems to have had great facility in acquiring, though he was not what would be considered a clever child. His favourites were, 'The Happy Land,' 'Canaan,' 'Lord, a little band and lowly,' 'Tis religion that can give,' 'Glory, Glory,' 'When Jehovah Jesus! I,' and the following:—

'I am but a little child,
Very sinful, very wild,
And my heart will oft rebel;
Yet I love my Saviour well.

'Yes, I love Him, who for me
Died upon the fatal tree,
Died to save my soul from hell;
Yes, I love my Saviour well.

'Sin defiles me, but I know
He can wash me white as snow.
I shall live where angels dwell,
If I love my Saviour well.

'Blessed Lord! from all alarms,
Fold Thy lamb within Thine arms;
And my life and death shall tell
That I love my Saviour well.'

A marked trait in his character was conscientiousness, which evidently showed that he was influenced by the fear of God. If told of an evening not to go far for a walk, he would go to the native servants, in the verandah or portico, and ask them, "If they ever prayed? Who they prayed to? If they knew who God was, and where He was?" "And then," his sister writes, "he would explain, in his child-like manner, the punishments and blessings each would receive according to his deeds." This practice appears to have been frequent with him during the last few months of his life. On one of these occasions, the servants, struck by his appear-

ance and earnestness, said he would doubtless be a "great, rich, and wonderful man." But their flattery was instantly rebuked by his replying, "What was the use of riches or earthly greatness? Did they not know about the rich man and Lazarus, how the beggar full of sores, when dead, was taken up to heaven to enjoy every comfort with God; and how the rich man, after death, was sent to hell, to burn, without one drop of water to quench his burning tongue." This circumstance was first made known to the family, after the little boy's death, by two of the servants asking for further information regarding "Braham and Fakeer" (a beggar), of whom he had been telling them.

Pulteney's illness was sudden and severe, but was borne with much patience. His medical attendant remarked, he had never seen such a sweet-tempered child. The closing scene we give in his sister's words: "A few hours before his death, he became delirious from raging fever, but after cold applications to the head, he became quite composed, but complained of feeling much pain all over his body, and of not knowing what was the matter with him. He then distributed his playthings amongst his brothers and sisters, saying he 'did not want them any more.' A few minutes after, he said he 'was going home.' When asked, if he would leave all and go, he said he 'intended to take all with him.' Mamma asked him not to leave us, for we could not go with him; he said, 'How can I stay when Jesus is calling me? Mamma cannot you see Jesus?' Mamma answered, 'No, my son.' He said, 'Put your ear close to my mouth and you will hear Him; look up as far as my hand reaches, and you will see Him; hear, He calls me still, how can I stay?' Then he asked, 'When I go to heaven, will my little brother (one who had died before he was born) come to see me? Will he know me? for I will not know him.' Mamma, anxious to know if he were quite sensible, asked him, 'Do you know what will become of you if you are wicked, my child?' 'If I am wicked,' he replied, 'I shall be sent down to hell in everlasting fire amongst wicked and miserable creatures.' 'And what will become of you, if you are good, my child?' 'I shall be taken up to heaven to dwell there with God and Christ, for ever and ever and ever, Amen.' 'Do you know who Jesus Christ is?' was then asked. 'He is God's own Son, who came down from heaven to save my soul from hell.' Mamma said, 'God

loves to hear little children pray, my son.' He said, 'Lord have mercy upon me, Christ have mercy upon me,' and continued—

'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child,
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.

Fain I would to Thee be brought,
Dearest Lord, forbid it not.
Give Thy little child a place,
In the kingdom of Thy grace.'

"Mamma then asked, 'Do you love Jesus, my son?' The answer was—

'Yes, I love Him, who for me
Died upon the fatal tree,
Died to save my soul from hell;
Yes, I love my Saviour well.'

"These were his last words; he became speechless, and died about an hour after."

And now, dear children, who have read this account, I must say one word to you. Many of you, I have no doubt, are older than little Pulteney was at the time of his death. Can you say as he did, "I love my Saviour well?" And if not, why not? I pray that the Lord may put it into your heart to ask yourselves these questions: Do I love Jesus? And if not, why not? No one is so good, so kind, so worthy of your love. No one has done so much for you; then, why do you not love Him?

If any can answer, I do love Jesus, then I would say to you, Be very thankful to God for having given you a heart to love Jesus, and follow little Pulteney's example—try to do good to all around you. Tell them of the glories of heaven, of the evil and danger of sin, and, above all, tell them of the preciousness of Jehovah-Jesus—Emmanuel, God with us.

PUT CHRIST IN YOUR WILL.

How few "put Christ into their Wills!" How many rich members of our churches, in making their wills, seem entirely to forget Christ and His cause. When they shall "pass through the valley and the shadow of death," they hope His "rod and staff will comfort them," and that He will "minister to them an abundant entrance into His everlasting kingdom;" but not a penny of their property which they are to leave behind, do they bequeath as a legacy to Him for the promotion of His kingdom. All is left to their children or more distant heirs, and that, often, when they need it not.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE NATURE, POWER, AND PRECIOUSNESS OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY EVENING, MARCH 29th, 1857,

BY THE

REV. H. GRATAN GUINNESS,

AT BLANDFORD STREET CHAPEL.

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."—1 JOHN 1. 7.

IF our Queen wished to pardon a rebel, it would not cost her one year of anxiety, one month of uneasiness, one week or one moment of trouble; all she would have to do would be to take a pen in her hand, and write her name at the bottom of a document. But when God wished to pardon the world, he so loved it that he gave from his bosom his only begotten Son, that "whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now, in order that you may estimate the more clearly the nature of God's feelings when he made that gift, just turn aside with me for a moment, and behold this scene in the distance. Let the curtain of the past be lifted; gaze down the vale of the world's history, and far back behold an aged man, whose hairs are white, leading by the hand a little boy; the servants are left behind; he travels onward towards the distant mountain, and as they ascend its side, the child looks up and says, "My father, behold here is the wood; but where is the lamb for the sacrifice?" "God," says the father, "will provide himself a lamb." They travel on to the top of the hill, and there the father, with his own hands, builds an altar of rough stones that he had himself got together; then he lays the wood upon it, and turning to his son Isaac, breaks the matter to him, and tells him that he is about to sacrifice him. We cannot attempt to describe to you the feelings of Isaac, still less the feelings of his father, Abraham. He takes his son by the arms, lifts him upon the altar, and with trembling hands he binds him. Oh! I cannot but think that that man's heart must have been nearly broken. You know David, when his ungodly son died, exclaimed, "O, Absalom, my son Absalom, my son, my son! would God I had died for thee!" The old man's heart was nearly broken. But think of Abraham, and his own child, Isaac, lying bound on the altar. See the hot tears streaming from his eyes, as he clasps him to his bosom. He takes the knife, and is about to slay him; but he dares not plunge it into that soft, warm breast. His hand trembles, but he must do it, and ere he makes the plunge he turns his head away. Now he lifts the knife again, and it is just descending, when, hark! Saith an angel, "Stop, Abraham!" and the knife falls from his hand. "Now," saith the angel, "loose thy child; behold a ram caught by the horns in a thicket." Then Abraham looses the child, seizes the ram, places it upon the altar, and plunges the knife into the sacrifice; blood streams from the wound; the savory incense goes up

The Mother's Magazine. September, 1860.

to God, and the son is safe in the arms of his father. But, ah! my friends, if I were to tell you that God, when sacrificing his Isaac, stopped, and that his Isaac was let go, it would be saying that our souls were undone. There was no archangel to come between God and Christ—between Christ and death. There was none to take his place: he died, and the blood that flowed from his open bosom, his pierced hands, and nailed feet, “cleanseth us from all sin.”

This evening I should like to speak to you about three things,—the *nature* of the blood of Christ, its *power*, and its *preciousness*. And oh! may the Spirit of God—and I am sure he is here listening, and ready to descend with blessings upon you—apply the word spoken to all your hearts, for the sake of the bleeding Jesus!

I. Now, as to the nature of this blood, we say, first, that it is innocent blood. Behold those two men crucified with Jesus; they are thieves, and blood streams from their hands and feet; but do you call it innocent blood? No; you say it is guilty. Behold that man! Who is he? Barabbas; he is condemned to death. Is his blood innocent? No; it is guilty. Why, then, did they put Barabbas on one side, instead of Christ? Was Christ guilty of murder? No; he came to bring life. Was he guilty of theft? No; he came to bring blessings. Yet they said, “Crucify him! crucify him!” shouting it out again and again, until they were hoarse. What was he guilty of? we ask. They said, of blasphemy. What was his blasphemy? That he, being a man, the son of the carpenter, the brother of James and Joses—that he, a Nazarene, maketh himself to be equal with God. Now, if he was not equal with God, surely it was blasphemy, and his blood that would have been shed would have been guilty blood. But, ah! he was the Son of God, and his blood was innocent. Hear what Pilate says, when the Jews were assembled round about him: “I wash my hands of the blood of this innocent person; and if you slay him, his blood be upon you and upon your children.” And they said, “Amen.” If the blood of the Lord Jesus was not innocent, that curse did no harm; but we will prove that it did harm. Why? Because Christ’s blood resting upon them, God’s curse fell on them. Wait awhile, and see the city of Jerusalem ransacked, its foundations razed, the whole city flowing with blood, and burning in flames! Wait awhile, and you shall behold the Jewish nation, from Damascus to Jericho and Joppa, scattered through the length and breadth of the world. You cannot go into any city in this world of ours where you will not find a Jew; for they are a scattered people, the curse of God resting upon them. It was necessary Christ’s blood should be innocent, because he died for the guilty. Among the heathens in ancient times, whenever they wanted to remove personal sins, it was always thought necessary to shed the blood of the innocent. Why else did they sacrifice their poor little infants? Why else did they slay their first-born? Mark *you*, Christ was innocent, and his blood takes away the sins of the guilty.

Again, it was sacred blood. Suppose we could show you some angel slain, perhaps, by the hand of a demon, and covered with his own blood. “Ah!” you would say, “what a solemn sight! The blood of that angel is sacred! But what say you to him who hung upon the tree? Is not his blood, that flows from the crown of thorns, sacred? Though men cried, “Crucify him;” though he died amid the execrations, the scorn, and the ignominy of multitudes,—angels were round about him, lifting up their voices, and chanting this solemn song, as they gazed upon his dying form:—“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” And they might have gone on to declare, that the heavens above should be rolled away, in the day of judgment, as a scroll; but his name should endure throughout all generations. Aye, it was sacred blood that was shed on Calvary.

Again, it was sacrificial blood. What is the meaning of this? Well, in order that you may understand it more clearly, behold this scene. It is early morning; dost thou see yon hill, and the tree on its top, and the faint early light of coming day in the east? The valley is spread far, far away; and behold now, as the sun rises, its shadows fall on the distant mountain. Now they come along the vale, and as the sun gets higher they run rapidly along, until the whole valley is filled with splendour. What is that typical of? Behold the mount Calvary, with the cross on the top; behold the sun of the gospel rising behind the mount, casting its light all down and far back the vale of history. Where doth the clear sharp shadow of the cross of Calvary fall? It falls upon the altar of Abel. Then as the sun rises higher, the light comes across the valley, you behold the shadow of the cross spreading along until it reaches the time of the death of Jesus; then the sun is at its noontide height, and

there is midnight darkness at mid-day. Dost thou see the meaning of this? Dost thou see how it is that these sacrifices of Abel, and Noah, and Isaac, and Jacob, and of the patriarchs, of Elijah and the prophets, set forth the great sacrifice upon Calvary? We say, then, that the blood of Jesus was sacrificial blood. Just ask the prophets to speak out to you. What saith Isaiah? "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." It was sacrificial blood. And would you for a moment gaze upon the cross itself? Then see—

"From his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingling down."

There was the blood of sacrifice.

"Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or take away one stain."

God knows it could not.

"But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name,
And better blood than they."

But again, the blood of Jesus was covenant blood. Before the world was, before God had created light, before angels were, when God was all alone in infinite space, alone in the midst of eternity, God the Father made a covenant with Christ, God the Son, and with God the Spirit. He made a covenant with Christ that he should see of the travail of his soul, and be abundantly satisfied; and Christ made a covenant with God, that he would go and make his soul an offering for sin. But, say one, "What had the Spirit to do with it?" Learn from the ninth of Hebrews; for it was through the everlasting Spirit that Christ offered himself to God without spot or blemish a sacrifice for us; you see the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, had a part in this covenant. Then, by and by, when man fell, behold God coming and speaking to Adam: "The seed of the woman shall crush the serpent's head, though the serpent shall certainly bruise his heel." This was the covenant God made with Adam; and God kept it. Christ kept his part of the covenant too. For he says, "Lo! I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; to do thy will, O God."

II. But we have to speak still further about the power of the blood of Jesus. We say nothing else can cleanse from sin; everything has been tried. Formerly, poor foolish sinners, idolaters, made a huge idol of brass, which they called Moloch; it was hollow within, and its arms were clasped; within they piled up coals, and set them on fire with vast pieces of wood, and when this idol was heated to a red heat, they took their infants, and threw them into the hot arms of the idol, and there let them die in pain; thinking thus, by the sacrifice of their children, to take away the sins of their souls. But, ah! these things are vain. Even in the present day, thousands of persons try the same experiment. You will see it if you travel in India; where there are hundreds of devotees, who call themselves fakirs, who put themselves to torture that they may remove their sins. I heard of one who stood upon the top of a pole with his arms stretched out, and his hands clasped; his nails grew right through his hands, and his arms were so stiff that he could not take them down without tearing the very muscles asunder and dislocating the bones; by this means he thought to remove his sin, but it was all in vain. I have heard of others who will take large hoops of iron and pass them through the fleshy part of the back, and connect these hoops with long ropes at the tops of poles, in order to have themselves swung round in the air, that their sins may be thus taken away. But it is all in vain for mortals like you and me to act in this way. In the church of Rome they wear hair shirts, and scourge themselves with knotted thongs of leather, scratch themselves with nails, or even starve themselves to death, to take away their sins; but it will not do. In India these devotees will sometimes kneel before the car of Juggernaut, lay their heads in the very ruts of the wheels, that they may pass over them, and crush their brain to pulp! Will these things take away their sins? God

knoweth it will not. Well, then, if these things will not take away sin, depend upon it your prayers will not remove them, nor your tears. Nay, nay, we may say with perfect truth,

“ Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my tears for ever flow,
 These for sin could not atone,
 Thou must save, and thou alone.”

I have heard of others who, in order to have their sins removed, have promised themselves some fifty, or a hundred, or perhaps a thousand years in purgatory; but it is all in vain. There is no such place as purgatory; and if there were it would not take away their sins. I believe it to be a solemn truth, that though you were in hell itself, your sins could not be taken away by the sufferings of the damned. Ah! no, they grow there more filthy—they add sin to sin, sorrow to sorrow, weeping to weeping, wailing to wailing, gnashing to gnashing, torment to torment, death to death! Though, sinner, thou wast to weep a week; though thy head were a fountain of tears, and thine eyes rivers of water; though thy back were in welts, from being lashed with knotted whips of leather; though thou wast to wear a shirt of hair, covered with thine own blood; though thou wast to throw thy children to the idol in sacrifice, and give all thy goods to feed the poor, and thy body to be burned; though thou wast to suffer fever in flames of hell—these things could not take away sin. But now hear what can. “The blood of Jesus Christ,” says John—oh! sweet remedy—“cleanseth from all sin.”

Now, learn that which cleanses from the foulest stain. You see this filthy raiment. A person washes it in the water day after day, and at last hangs it up to dry, but it is not cleansed for all that. Do you see that dark spot—this black blotch? it is not removed. The raiment is washed again and again; but the spot is not removed. You ask, why? It is an old stain. That is the way with our souls. You may take away the outward defilement; but there are stains of years' standing. You committed adultery when a young man—what about that? You committed fornication in your youth—what about that? You lied many and many a time—what about those lies? What about these evil stains? My friends, I must deal with you as sinners—God knoweth we are all guilty. Now what can remove these things? “Why,” says Paul, “the blood of Christ.” I declare to you in the name of God, that though you were filthy as Manasseh, as vile as Magdalene, as guilty as Paul, whose hands were stained with the blood of God's first martyrs, a traitor like Judas, a liar like Ananias, the blood of Christ can cleanse you from every stain. There is nothing too vile to be cleansed by it. I recollect some time since hearing of a man, a poor guilty man, who went out to Australia and endeavoured to collect a fortune. After labouring for years he did collect a fortune, and went on board ship to return home. It was a bad ship; there was not a man on board who did not curse and swear. But of all the bad, he was the worst; his throat was an open sepulchre; the poison of asps lay upon his lips, beneath his tongue; he spoke nought but blasphemy. Well, you know in the hands of God are the winds of heaven. I have often thought of that as I beheld the storm rising, and the clouds careering, and have heard the winds rushing through the midnight sky, and seen the huge troubled billows of the Atlantic bursting in foam upon the trembling vessel; I have thought of God who holdeth the winds in his hands, and the ocean in the hollow of his hands. It pleased God on this occasion to raise a storm, so that the vessel was tossed upon the surges. The man slept in his hammock that swung between the decks below. He dreamed, and thought (as it really was) that it was a dark and stormy night, that the clouds were drifting over head; and he swung and swung again. He thought he saw from heaven a huge black arm stretched out, and his hammock swung backwards and forwards. He thought he saw from that hand a long black roll, reaching to the very edge of the sea; and he gazed, as he swung in the hammock fast asleep, amidst the storm and darkness, and he saw that the black roll was the record of his sins. As he read, there they were: adultery, fornication, incest, lies, all manner of sins, blasphemies, iniquities, and guilt; and the man trembled in his hammock. Presently he saw the roll taken up into heaven; and by and by, as he swung still in his hammock, he thought he saw the black clouds floating away—away, and a white cloud came floating over him in vast volumes. The winds were calmed, the waves lulled, and then down from heaven there was stretched a white arm, down from the blue sky above, and from it there fell a long white roll; and as he gazed upon it, he saw that it was the same roll, inscribed on which were these words, which he read as he swung

in his hammock: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." It was in letters of blood. He awoke from his sleep, his hammock still swinging; and as he waked, he felt the vessel tossing and pitching; he heard the masts grinding in the sockets; and springing from his hammock, he leaped upon deck. The night was pitchy dark; the flames of forked lightning flashed from the lurid clouds away—away over the mountainous masses of the storm-tossed waters. The vessel quivered for a moment upon the snowy summit of the surges, dived into the deep dells of the dark waters, and thus went from billow to billow. The man's heart trembled, and he thought, "Good God! if I was to die now I should go to hell!" And the idea flashed across his mind, "There is hope; for the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin." He went down below, and fell upon his knees; his hands were clasped earnestly; the tears streamed from his eyes; prayers went up to heaven; he cried for mercy, and he found it. And let me tell you, that man, through the blood of Jesus, guilty as he was, was saved from death and hell. Sinner, art thou guilty like this man? Perhaps there is some young man here guilty of swearing many an oath; perhaps some Mary Magdalene in this congregation. God knoweth there is sure to be. Aye, and perhaps there is one here who will have to die before the end of next week, whose guilt is still on him. What shall we say to such? My friends, we say to you, hope; for the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.

But we say to you, it only cleanseth the penitent. Now, you know Manasseh was a guilty man; he was a murderer, as well as a sinner in many other respects; and he was never cleansed from his sins until he repented. David was a guilty man; he was an adulterer and a murderer; he was not cleansed from his sins until he repented. You remember that blessed Psalm of his, the fifty-first—"Have mercy upon me, O God," cries the poor penitent with streaming eyes; and God did have mercy upon him, because he repented. Then you know how guilty Saul transgressed; God never had mercy upon him till he prayed; "Ananias, go and open the eyes of that man, for, behold he prayeth." Peter denied his Lord, and he did not find mercy until he went out and wrung his hands in intense anguish—I cannot tell you what he felt. "What," he must have thought, "have I denied my Lord, my Saviour? Wretched man that I am! Oh, that the earth might open beneath me, and swallow me up; for that would be what I deserve!" He repented with tears and found mercy. And, sinner, if thou wilt repent thou wilt find mercy too. But the blood of Christ never cleanses the repenting, except when they believe. The gaoler came in trembling to Paul, and said to him—the very man he had been lashing, perhaps, or putting in the stocks—"What shall I do to be saved?" What did Paul say? Did he say, "Gaoler, burn your whip; break those stocks up; pull down this gaol; give up your profession; do good works; wait on God in the temple; pray—pray?" No, Paul did not say any such thing. But he said, "Believe." "But," says the sinner, "where am I to get faith?" You know old John Bunyan makes his pilgrim, when he gets to the cross, lose his burden; it then rolled away and fell down to the sepulchre. So it will be with thee.

Ere we leave this second part of our subject, we will take you to this scene. Behold a pool of water; a wall is round about it; there is no porch in this wall. There is a sick man at the edge of this pool; another there, and another there; there is one who has been laid there year after year. Now, watch them. The poor, feeble, sick old man, with his pale face, and grey hairs, and haggard look, stretches out his arm, and raises himself on his pillow. He puts out his withered limb and tries to get it into the water. He does just succeed; he gets it just down to the edge of the water. He stays trembling there, and he looks up; he waits and watches. There is a leper; he goes down to the very edge of the water; he clasps his hands, and looks and watches, ready at an instant's notice to jump in. There is one withered, and he totters to the edge leaning on his staff. There is one doubled up, another with an issue of blood, another blind, another lame, another halt, all crowding round the pool. What are they waiting for so eagerly? It is for the angel to trouble the water. Presently, down from the shining courts of God comes a white-winged messenger; swiftly, yet softly he comes through the fields of air, and, folding his white plumage, sinks his feathers for a moment softly upon the pool of water. They spring in; but only one gets in first, and that one smiles and goes out rejoicing, because he is cleansed. The others shrug their shoulders. Some weep, some wring their hands. The aged cripple goes back to his bed. The poor man with the leprosy goes off just as bad as ever. Now tell me, my friends, why was it these men were so eager to get into the pool? "That they might have their diseases healed," you say. I ask you, "do you think they were sensible men?" "Yea, certainly." Then, if they were wise men we will prove you fools. How so? Behold this solemn sight. There

is one blind from his mother's womb; there is one halt from his birth; there is one lame—he has never taken a step Zion-ward; there is one a cripple, who never yet carried the cross; there is one withered—he never raised a hand in God's work; there is one dumb—he never spoke in God's praise, or uttered a prayer; there is one leprous—good God what a filthy object; there is one covered with “wounds”—every-day sins, “bruises”—slighter sins, what the world calls white ones, and “putrifying sores”—besetting sins. Here we are, now, a company of sick men together. What shall we do? Where shall we go to have our diseases healed? Our bodies look very well, you know, but inside there is nothing but dead men's bones and rottenness. We appear beautiful without, but there is a cancer at work within. We are blind, though we appear to see; dumb, though we appear to speak; deaf, though we appear to hear; dead, though we appear to live; halt, though we appear to run; withered though we appear to work—what shall we do? I am in earnest. Shall we die thus? Then many of us must be damned. Well, what saith the text? Blessed be God, in our midst—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.”

And now, my friends, shall there be a general rush to the fountain of blood to-night? What, wilt thou delay? God forbid. Leper, wilt thou? God forbid. Blind man, wilt thou? God forbid. Thou lame, halt, weak, worn, dying, wan, weary, wicked, wilt thou delay? God forbid. Into the fountain with you at once, and may your sins be cleansed by the blood of Christ. But this is old news to you. It is possible many of you have known of this year after year, and still remain uncleansed. “But,” says one, “I never saw it in this light before.” Well, then, take advantage of it now that thou dost see it, and let thy guilt be washed away. May the Lord give you repentance.

III. Ere we part, I must say a few words about the most blessed part of our text: that is, the preciousness of the blood of Christ. We remark that by this we enter into the Holy of Holies. Sinner, God this night is sitting between the cherubim. If thou dost go to God without the blood of Christ, thou shalt die; thy blood shall be upon thy head. But if thou goest through the blood of Jesus, the way is wide open, the veil is rent in the midst. There is an open way through his pierced bosom. If you come thus you shall meet God, and God shall meet you with smiles. See that man. His son has sinned against him many a day. By and bye he makes up his mind to return, and the father watches, and runs, and embraces, and forgives him. That father was a sinner, as well as that son. Rise, now, to God the Father of us all. And we say to you if you would come through the blood of Jesus Christ, you shall be reconciled to him, and taken to his arms again. I would describe to you the blessings of this reconciliation with God. I tell you it lights within the soul a flame of love; it fills one with joy to overflowing with the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. Oh, my friends would to God you could know this practically. Look at the case of Captain Vicars. He went from his home, enlisted in a regiment, got his commission as a captain, and went abroad to the West Indies, where he remained five years. His Bible was laid in a napkin in his drawer, and he was going fast down to hell. One day he went into the tent of a brother officer, and saw the Bible on the table. The first words he read in it were the words of our text—“The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” “Well,” thought he, “if that is the case, as I am a sinner, I will trust in the blood of Christ, and I will live henceforth as a man should live whose sins have been taken away by the blood of Christ.” He was faithful thenceforth unto Christ, and went about doing good. You have all heard of his deeds before Sebastopol; how he went from tent to tent, from regiment to regiment, and from hospital to hospital. They said, after his death, that he had been the means of steadying about four hundred men in his regiment. One night, when lying in ambush, waiting for the enemy, his watchful eye, peering through the darkness, detected a large moving mass of Russians. Turning round to his men, he said, “Jump up!” He bade them charge. They did so, and rushed against the enemy, bayonet in hand. He fell at their head, pierced through the breast by a bullet. But his soul soon winged its flight, and being absent from the body, was present with the Lord. I cannot attempt to describe to you the blessedness of this reconciliation with God. I simply mention that case to show that there was a man who enjoyed much sweet communion with God by being brought nigh through the blood of Christ. If

there is any poor guilty sinner who has a right to speak to you on this subject, it is the one who is speaking to you to-night. God knoweth I have been wretched in my time. As a poor wanderer in life's wilderness, have I dug deep wells to fetch up the water of life, and happiness, and pleasure, but I have found nothing but hot sand. God hath led my steps to mount Zion, and to the fountain filled with blood. He hath reconciled me to himself. And oh, I would to God you were all reconciled to him! I "pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." For know, "that God hath made Christ to be made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we through his death may be made the righteousness of God in him."

Well, a word more upon this subject. Not only does the blood of Christ reconcile a sinner to God, but it keeps him after he is reconciled. We say—

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day ;"

and you say, also—

"Through Him, I, though vile as he,
Washed all my sins away."

And you say further—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

But I tell you something else. I say—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And *Christians* plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

Because we contract stains of filth in our journey heavenwards. The blood of Jesus Christ also cleanseth us from death. Here is a solemn scene. Behold the aged man and his children about him. It is evening—the red light fading away in the distant west. He has got a lamb in the midst. He lays it on the table, takes a knife, and plunges it into its bosom. Having shed its blood, he separates it part from part, and taking the blood he goes out and sprinkles it upon the door post. He comes in, and waits quietly. In an hour or two, it is near midnight. See the man in the midst of his tabernacle, and his children around him. He is upon his knees, and he prays—"Oh God, save us, take care of us for thy name's sake." The man's prayer is heard. He trembles, however, for it is near midnight; he listens; there is a solemn stillness. Now he hears a cry in the distance, and there is another, then a shriek next door, then a cry beside him; he looks upon his children, they are all safe, he blesses God for their deliverance. He hears the wings of the angel as he passes over the house, he hears many and many a cry through the land of Egypt, for the first-born are slain; but as the angel passeth over the house and seeth the blood on the door-post he spares the inmates of that house. Dost thou know the meaning of this? In the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, if you are marked with the blood of Christ, you shall be spared, not else; without this you must die. A dying Hindoo once lay upon the road-side; a missionary was passing along, and as he gazed upon the dying man he stooped and said to him, "Are your sins taken away? Are you safe for eternity?" The man made an effort to speak, but could not utter a word. "Oh, dying man," said the missionary, "tell me what hope you have." The man's lips moved, and the missionary stooping down, caught these words—"The blood of Christ, his Son, cleanseth from all sin." The missionary said, "Where did you learn that?" The man closed his eyes and died. One hand was clasped tight, and between the two middle fingers was a piece of white paper held firmly in the grip of death. With difficulty the piece of paper was taken out, and the missionary saw that it was the first chapter of John, containing the words he had uttered. Ah! sinner, that dying man had but one leaf of the Bible, and he grasped it in death. Thou hast the whole Bible, but it is wrapt in a napkin; it is unopened and unread! God forgive you! There is a day shortly coming in which God shall call us all to account; shortly the trumpet shall be placed to the lips of the archangel, and that vast volume of sound shall roll forth throughout the world, and every glen, and mountain, and rock, and hill, and valley and wood, shall echo and re-echo with the mighty and matchless music. Montgomery speaking of a thunder-storm at night, says—

"An angel might have passed my bed,
Sounded the trump of God, and fled."

Ah! that thunder-clap woke none that were dead; but the clap of judgment will. In that day millions shall appear before the flaming bar of Jesus with clouds of saints and hosts of angels; he shall descend with sounds of trumpets from the highest heaven, and call millions to stand before the bar. In that day, the angel shall go hither and thither, flying swiftly over the length and breadth of the land; he shall take the tares and gather them up into mighty bundles, which he shall pile together, and God shall curse them. with the lightning of his eye he shall kindle a huge fire, and I tell you solemnly, while the saints in heaven sing "hallelujah," the smoke of their torments shall ascend slowly, and ascend for ever? Why? Because those were not washed with the blood of Christ, and these have been.

A word more before we part. Not only does the blood of Christ save from death, but it brings us life. Rise, now, from this dark world, this London, full of sin and iniquity, stained with blood, salt with tears, black with night, dark with infamy, rise up, and stand on the top of Mount Pisgah, let the apostle John stand on one side, and the archangel on the other. Saith the archangel to John, "Who are these (pointing heavenwards) in white raiment, and whence came they?" Saith John, "Sir, thou knowest." Then saith the archangel, "These are they who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; they are kings and priests to God for ever." Behold the Lamb's bride. Would you see what follows? Oh, sweet thought! Behold the bride of Jesus, arrayed in white raiment, clean and fair, a white veil hangs from her peerless brow, that sparkles with many a fair jewel, filled with the light of heaven, the orange flowers fadeless, and amaranthine crowns wound about her hair, the golden girdle bound about her waist, and Jesus the bridegroom, standing near, leading her by the hand through the fields of heaven. "Now," saith Christ, leading her into the place of riches, "dost thou behold all these treasures?" "Yes," saith the bride. "All these" saith Christ, "are blood-bought. And dost thou behold those sweet green fields that are now beyond the dark swelling flood?" "Yes," she replies. "All these are blood-bought. And dost thou behold this fair city of Jerusalem? This is blood-bought too," saith Christ. Now she gazes on Jesus, and he leads her to God. Hark now, for the bells of heaven ring many a merry peal, and the angels who are gazing on her, are saying, "Is this the Lamb's bride? Did he die for her?" And Jesus presents her in the presence of God. She gazes on Christ, and says, "I am dressed in white raiment; but what is this that thou hast on?" Saith Christ, "It is the vesture dipped in blood." Mark you the bridegroom shall wear red raiment, typical of his death, and the bride shall wear white raiment, typical of her righteousness. And then, let me tell you, what God shall join together, shall never be parted; for Christ shall be one with his church for evermore.

Now let me ask you, before you leave the house of God, are you Christ's? I cannot but feel deeply anxious about you, God knoweth. I have sometimes thought, as I have gazed upon a congregation, oh, if these people could but be saved, good God, it were worth dying for! Here you sit, men, women, and children, old and young, rich and poor together. I see death upon every brow; I see every face marked with the fingers of time; I see that you are all going hence; this outward man of yours is dying and dropping to the tomb; it is going fast to dust: are you prepared to meet your God? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? I beseech you, go as you are now to Jesus. Oh! why won't you go? If you will he promises life. Go then, go as you are, go now, go with your sins, go with your guilt, go with your burdens, go with your iniquity, go with your infamy, go vile, go naked, go leprous, go blind; go, dying man, dying woman, dying child, go, go; and we tell you solemnly, in the name of the Most High, that if you will but go to your cross, and believe and pray, the blood of Christ, God's living Son, shall cleanse you from all your sins.

Sketches and Essays.

CHRIST FORMED IN US.

WE value every power that can give pleasure. It requires no religious faith to appreciate skill in music or painting. Let a list be made, if you please, of every kind of power or skill you would wish yourself possessed of. In place of wishing that you could paint like Raphael, play like Handel, write like Milton, discourse on philosophy like Plato, or on theology like whichever of the theologians you most admire, rather extend your wish, and let it include the formation of the very soul of each and all of these in yourself, so that your spirit should be the very brightness of their glory, the concentration of all that was peculiar and personal in each. Would not this imply a wealth of happiness at which imagination staggers.

The formation of Christ in you implies all this, and infinitely more; for it includes every excellence in every form, and the very genius, or soul, of each several excellence. Paul says: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And, again: "My life is hidden with Christ in God." This is plainly designed to express the utmost conceivable intimacy of friendship and love; the most perfect harmony of sentiment, blending of sympathies, identity of pursuits, and unity of life. This statement is perfectly intelligible to the understanding; but its worth to the heart must needs depend, not on the writer's, but upon the reader's illustrations of the fact. Summon, then, to your most vivid remembrance, the hours of greatest delight, in all your experience of human fellowship. Bring to mind the occasion, upon which you discovered, that some one soul was more completely responsive to your own than any beside; that by this one, more than by any other, you had been understood; that by this one, your tenderest, most profound, most pervading sentiments had been completely reciprocated. If to this you can add, as an actual element of the felicity, that the friend thus discovered, was

The Mother's Magazine. October, 1860.

immensely your superior, and, consciously to yourself, took you up into the exalted sphere of his larger life, and made you completely at home in it, then are you happy, indeed, in possessing an emblem, only an emblem—yet a true and significant emblem—of the love and sympathy of Christ; and an emblem containing some hint of what it may be to have Christ formed in you, the hope of glory, the fountain of eternal happiness.

Now, this life of God in the soul of man, which to you, my dear friend, may be only an idea, has been, and is at this hour to thousands, a reality, a consciousness. Come with me, and I will introduce you to such an one. It happens that the one nearest at hand is in the chamber of sickness: a wife and a mother, yet young, fair, and far more and better than beautiful. Here she lies. You observe that smile, and do not need assurance that it is a heavenly ray from a Sun that never sets.

"I have come to have the pleasure of reading to you this morning. What shall I read?"

"Read me one of the Psalms of Praise. My heart is overflowing with the love of God, and I feel the want of one of those to help my utterance."

"I will read you the one hundred and twelfth: 'Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; that delighteth greatly in His commandments.' There's a wealth of meaning in that word 'greatly.' It is not said: 'Blessed is the man that delighteth partially or occasionally.' But you rejoice in the Lord always."

"Yes; I often want to sing in the night. So did mother. I remember the last night I slept with her. She was very weak: she could scarcely utter a note; but her heart was full of joy, and she must sing:

"To Jesus, the crown of my hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone;
Oh, bear me, ye cherubim, up,
And waft me away to His throne!"

That I may sing His praises as I would, and as they ought to be sung."

"Permit me to resume our reading: 'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' You may, perhaps, remember that Taylor says: 'Men are apt to look to the brightest part of the heavens for light, in times of peril and of sorrow; whereas they should expect

it from the deepest darkness.' It is true; and, consciously or unconsciously to himself, he was doubtless indebted to this very verse for the assurance."

"Yes, that is true, and I must remember to repeat that verse to my dear husband; for he is much depressed lately, and it is the very consolation he needs. Yes; 'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' It is a sweet verse. I shall think of it."

"And here is another verse for you: 'He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.'"

"Surely that is for me. For I was thinking this morning of my little boy. He is in the country. And I was thinking, what if I should hear that he was ill, or had met with some accident? That is for me, and I will fear no evil tidings."

Listen to another witness:

"You ask me about the royal way I am travelling. It is a royal way, for it leads to the blessed Saviour; and, God be praised that I am permitted, so far, to bear my humble testimony to the fulness and all-sufficiency of Jesus, as a Saviour and a Guide, even in the darkest hours. An unconverted person, looking on, might exclaim: 'What, is this a royal road? Do you call her blessed? Why, it is full of thorns and briars, and she seems almost crushed by heavy weights; and it is a slow and lingering step alone that can ascend its steep; and she pauses often, not looking back, blessed be God, as though her heart and strength failed her; and then she is entirely alone!'"

"Not so, not so," dear unconverted friend, we may exclaim; stop a little, and we will explain to you the mystery. It is all true that you have seen; but you have not seen all. She is not alone. Earthly friends, it is true, are far from her, and her heart may bleed in consequence; but there is a Friend, who has preceded her in the same path, who is the strength of her heart and her portion for ever. She hears a voice you cannot hear, constantly saying, "Follow Me." And can we, dear M., be sufficiently grateful that we can answer, in the strength of the Lord Jesus: Yes, dear Saviour, even unto death? I cannot give you any adequate idea of the strength of my affection for our Saviour's cause. It is all in all to me. And whether I die sooner or later, I glory in the cross of Christ; and when others say: See what a wreck fanaticism has made, my heart leaps within me

that I am such a fanatic. With my Bible in my hand, and God's promises in my heart, I can look forward with calmness to any and every result. With my eye fixed on Christ, and my soul drinking at the "flowing fountain," I seem to be on an eminence from which the interests, the happiness, and the sorrows of this life seem almost unimportant and of little moment. What I want now is, more love, more vitality, a more constant realization of my complete dependence upon our blessed Saviour. I want to be so ingrafted in Him, that, if all social, all earthly nourishment fails, the fruit of my soul shall bear witness unto others that there is an indissoluble union between the branch and the Vine.

"You once spoke of being lonely. May God in mercy spare you the discipline of learning what it is, in all its length and breadth, to be alone. How often do I think of your kind invitation to visit you, and weep that it may not be accepted; but my heavenly Father has permitted me to be hedged in; my friends and all my familiar acquaintance being put far from me; and shall I put aside the cup? Sometimes my hand trembles so, I am afraid I shall give way. Sometimes I am tempted to cheer you, to animate you, by a relation of my past experience. The present I should not dare to confide to you, nor to any other; for you could not aid me, and you would not believe me. Had I time, I would strengthen you for the race, by telling you how the Lord leads me. For I have never let go His hand, nor lost the sound of His voice. How many hours, when my soul seems bowed with all the waves and billows of life, are cheered by hearing His voice saying, 'Lo, it is I; be not afraid.'"

Thus far her testimony to a kindred spirit. A word addressed to one less responsive:

"You say you have been troubled about my health, &c. The first thought awakened in my mind, in hearing you thus express yourself, was of the difference in our views; the difference in our estimation of the same things. Now, it is written in the 13th verse of the 14th chapter of Revelation: 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.' Can any one desire to be more than blessed? Can you find a situation in life in any degree comparable to being with the blessed Saviour? Why, the blessed society of saints and of martyrs is enough to induce any one to receive God's summons with joy, did not Satan so blindfold his victims. I am not going to die; I am going to be

translated. Our human nature, it may be, may shrink at the swelling of Jordan, and Satan may be allowed to sift us as wheat; but what says our Saviour? 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.' And who so prevalent as the Beloved of the Father? Whoever fell trusting in the Glorious Triune God?"

This is the testimony, the unequivocal and ever-consistent testimony of one in whom Christ was formed. I can vouch for it, from the most intimate knowledge. And she departed as she anticipated. She was caught up into heaven some years ago, almost without notice to quit her earthly tenement. No tedious ordeal of wearisome days was requisite to a spirit so prepared as this:

"Her winge were growne,
To heaven she's flowne;
'Cause I have none,
I'm lefte."

But I followed her to the gates of Paradise, and heard the angels singing their joy over her all that day, and for many days thereafter.

IS THE CONCERT THE PLACE FOR THE CHRISTIAN?

THOUGH we shall not be surprised to find ourselves called ignorant and canting hypocrites, we venture to testify against what we believe to be a great evil of the present day, and one that will work against "a great revival,"—namely, the union of Christians with the world in the concert-room.

Is the concert of profane music the right thing for a professing Christian to patronize? Music, in itself, is one of God's good gifts, and, if used rightly, will tend to improve and elevate. Beautiful are many of the strains that rise upon the ear and bathe the soul in melody; and from the flowing stream of harmony we can hardly doubt the spiritual man might possibly have his soul refreshed, though that stream came through a polluted course. But is it not more probable he will drink the polluted waters, and so himself become polluted?

Is not the concert the first step to the theatre? Who will not, when he has contracted a thorough taste for the former, attend the opera when he has a chance?—“*for the music there is so very fine.*” And when the opera has been indulged in a few times, and the finer feelings of the soul blunted by contact with the world’s pleasures, is it not likely there will be a desire to see what the theatre is like? *That* is visited; and no perceptible harm being experienced by the now lukewarm professor, it is discovered not to be so bad as it was said to be. So the union with the world in its pleasures is complete.

Now, whilst this has been going on, how have the means of grace been attended? Have the class-meeting, the prayer-meeting, and the week-night preaching never been missed? Has the family altar been regularly surrounded? and has the closet been as constantly visited as before?

But, supposing the concert only has been indulged in, has not the work of God been neglected for it? and has there not been an unlawful mingling with the world? If entirely sanctified to God, could a person conscientiously attend? Have not “little things” kept back too many of us from that high state of spiritual enjoyment which we believe to be attainable? At the first glance we may not discover this; but our hearts are deceitful above all things, and need searching diligently with the candle of God’s Word in order to a discovery of the truth. Would the world itself expect to find an earnest Christian joining its ranks here? We may rest assured that, where the world would be surprised to find us, we are wrong in going.

But some will tell us, “We only go to concerts of sacred music.” If possible, we think it worse to encourage these than the others. This may seem strong; but we cannot help thinking our position a right one. What do the musicians themselves intend by their performances? If they have no intention to worship God, how often is the thrice-holy Name blasphemed for gain! and how often are the words of praise rolled forth in egotistic pomp and vanity! Can any one frankly say that this is not a breach of the third commandment?

THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW.

"MOTHER, I will be everything to you that I can be; I promise you that."

A look of high resolve made the young brow man-like in expression. Not yet had ten summers deepened the gold on those fair locks. His earnest blue eye looked fondly in the faded face that bent over him. There was a world of love in his soul—a love that was not only lip-deep, but was proved by acts of self-denial.

They were poor, that mother and son; oh, how poor they were! But, in holy heart-love, they possessed untold riches. Yes, out of their bank in heaven, they drew every day, every hour, uncounted treasure.

He had just secured a situation in a shop about five miles from where they lived. It was but a small pittance; but, of late, the mother had grown so feeble that she could earn nothing.

The boy was to have his meals with his employer, and could, if he choose, sleep there. But he did not choose. For a glad smile from mother; for a pressure of that feeble hand; for the tender, Christian words that came from those pale lips, he was willing, after his day's work, to walk home, dark and tedious though the way was. When he earned any trifle extra, he brought home some little delicacy to his mother, and which was sweet to the invalid because he brought it.

One night the widow looked from her window, and said, as she saw the twilight deepening earlier than its wont, "He will not come to-night." So, quite confident that he would not venture in that storm, she read her Bible till her heart kindled with the holy words, and, putting out her light, went to rest.

She knew not how long she had slept, when a voice awakened her. The voice, so dear to her, was crying, "Mother! mother!" Instantly rising, she groped for a light, unfastened the door, and there stood her son, covered with mire, from head to foot. His face was wet, but the honest, happy smile was noways abated.

"My boy! how could you come on such a night?" exclaimed the widow.

"Why, mother, storm couldn't keep me from you! I lost my way, got into a creek, and it must be midnight; but I meant to come, for my master gave me a trifle to-night, and I knew how much you needed it."

"My dear boy!" sprang from the mother's full heart, as the silent tears trickled down her pale cheeks.

"I wonder I haven't thought of it before," she said, musingly. "After this I'll put a light in the window. It won't show far; but it will be pleasant for you to see it, and know that I am watching for you."

For three years the lamp was placed in the window every night; and, "as bright as mother Locke's little window," became a favourite saying.

At the end of that time, the widow's son was offered a place on board of a vessel, and he accepted it. It cost him none knew what a struggle, to part from the being he loved, with an almost worshipful affection. But the time had come when he must go forth into the world to do battle for himself and for her, and a sailor's life seemed to open up the way.

"It seems to me," said the fond mother, when, with a deep sigh, she parted from him, "as if I must still put the light in the window. I shall think sometimes I hear the fall of your footsteps, the click of the latch, your pleasant voice. O my son, my son, if I could but light you over the stormy waters!"

"Mother, God will do that," said he, pointing to the glowing heavens. "God will light me through storm and through calm; but, mother, I shall think every night that the lamp is in the window; that you sit near it; that somebody blesses you for the guiding ray; and, above all, that you are praying for me."

The long voyage was nearly ended; but another voyage was to end before that. The widow was taken ill. And, as she lay helplessly upon her bed, and the neighbours came in to care for her, she would say, "Put the lamp in the window; my son will be thinking of it."

Night after night, and even until her eyes grew dim, she would watch the radiance of the flickering light, only saying, sometimes, "Shall I live to hear his footsteps? Will that feeble flame still burn, when my life's light has gone out?"

She lay quietly; a smile upon her lips, her eyes closed, her hands folded.

"I have longed to see him," she said; "I have prayed earnestly, But I have given it all up now. I shall not meet him in this world."

"Have you put the light in the window?" she asked, suddenly, earnestly, a few moments after. "It is growing dark."

Alas! it was not the light that was growing dark. Her hands grew cold. Over her countenance came that mysterious shadow that falls but once on any mortal face.

"O, my son! my son!" she whispered, "tell him"—they bent lower to catch the failing words—"tell him I will put a light in the window of heaven, to guide his footsteps there."

The thrilling sentence was hardly spoken, when the shadow dropped from the suffering face, and it smiled in the calm majesty of death.

Not many days after, a ship came into the port of a busy city. Among all those who stepped from her decks, none were more hopeful, more joyous, than the widow's son. He had passed through the ordeal of a sea life, so far, unscathed. He had kept himself as spotless as if at every night-fall his feet had been turned towards the door of his mother's cottage. How his heart bounded as he thought of her! It did not occur to him that, perhaps, her silver locks were lying under the lid of the coffin. Oh, no! he only thought of the pleasant light in the window that her hands had trimmed for him.

Beautiful was the day on which he travelled again the long-accustomed road. How pleasant now to go home with sufficient to provide for the comfort of that dear mother! She should never want again. He would take her to a better home, and give her the luxuries he had once longed to see in her possession. Hope on, dreamer! Yonder comes one who trudges on laggingly—a farmer, in heavy boots and frock, his whip in his hand.

"I see you know me," said the young sailor, smiling. "Well, how is my mother?"

"Your—mother—"

"Yes; is she well? is she expecting me? Of course she is; we're late by a month, full."

"Your mother, James, well"—he strikes his whip on the dusty road. How can he crush that happy heart?

"There, you need not speak!" cried the young man, in a voice of sudden anguish; and he buried his face in his hands.

"My poor lad, your mother is"—

"Don't! don't!" cried the other, showing now a face from which all colour had fled. "Oh, my mother! my mother!—she is gone, gone—and I coming home so happy!"

For some moments he sobbed as in agony. How dreary the world had grown! The flowers had lost fragrance, the sun warmth: his heart seemed dead.

"James, she left a message for you," said the farmer, wiping his eyes with his sleeve.

"A message for me?" It seemed as if the white lips could hardly speak.

"Yes. Says she, 'Tell my son that I will put a light in the window of heaven, to guide his foot-steps there.'"

"Did she, oh, did she say that? God bless you for telling me! All my long voyage I have thought of the light in her little window. I have seemed to see it streaming along, till it grew brighter and brighter as I drew nearer. A light in the window of heaven? Yes, mother, I will think still you are waiting for me. I could not see you in these long years, but I knew the light was burning. I cannot see you now, but I know the light is burning. I will come, mother!"

Slowly he went to the graveyard, and there he knelt and wept upon her lowly grave. But not there, he thought her. A sweet vision was vouchsafed him. Then he knew that the light was placed in the window of heaven.

Once again he knelt in the room where he had last left her. Nothing was removed; but oh, how much was wanting! There, on the window-sill, stood the lamp—that brought the tears afresh. But he took his mother's well-worn Bible, and, kneeling with it in his hand, as if she could hear him, he sought her Saviour, and consecrated himself to a life and work of righteousness. From that cottage he went out into the world, carrying his grief as a sacred memorial; but seeing always, wherever his work led him, his waiting mother, and the lamp in the window of heaven!

CHRIST ALONE.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am glad to find that you take a new view of your position, that you now understand what the painful *feeling that we cannot feel* our sins is awakening. You now see that you were limiting the Spirit of God unwarrantably when you expected Him to bring you to serious thought in accordance with a method which *you* had laid down. I wish that I were able to express agreement with the whole of your letter; but I cannot: when the Christian friend, of whom you speak, told you to come to Christ, and to be no more distressed, I think that he told you just what God Himself does. You say, however, that you cannot think that Christ would receive you at once, and that surely salvation cannot be quite so easy as this. “I do not feel my repentance to be real,” you say; “and my faith! alas! it seems to me to be scarcely a spark.” I suppose, then, my dear friend, that if you could find yourself better qualified to come to the Lord Jesus Christ you would do it; but, in the meantime, your repentance and your faith are too inadequate to admit of it. “O that I were fit to come!” I can imagine you inwardly exclaiming, while you go bowed down all the day long.

Let me assure you, my dear friend, that you are erring again, and in the very direction of your former mistake, for you wanted formerly more acute awakening before you should go to Christ, and now you are wanting other frames—faith, and repentance, and love, and many more. When you have made such attainments, *then*—Then! ah! when do you expect to have them? Do you think that you are nearer obtaining them than you were? Do you think that you shall soon, that you shall ever, at this rate, be qualified to come to Christ? But the truth is, as I have said, that you are mistaking—you are waiting for feelings, when you ought simply, and at once, to trust in Christ. Your friend’s recommendation startled you; it had previously been your opinion, that a preparation must be made before you could have any right to believe in Christ; you thought you required this, and that, and the other frame; you thought you must first qualify yourself, and then come. How

* From “The Saviour and the Sinner; or, Letters to a Friend on the subject of a Sinner’s Acceptance with God.” Glasgow: T. Murray and Son.

strange that, startling and novel as your friend's advice seemed, it is the very truth of the Bible, which you have read a thousand times ! The Bible requires no preparation before coming to Christ—it demands no feelings as a qualification. It says that *Christ* saves, not *frames*. “Him that cometh unto Me,” is its language, “I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37) ; but *you* add, “Yes, if we come with deep repentance, strong faith, etc.,” an addition which you have no right to make, for if the sinner comes to Christ at all, it does not signify what frames brought him. Do you not see, my dear friend, that you are inverting the Bible order, and, instead of making the frames subordinate, you are asking yourself, “Have I this frame, and that?” when you ought to go to Christ. It is Christ, I repeat, who saves, not frames.

You are, perhaps, saying, “But, am I to be saved without any qualifications?” and you revert, when you ask the question, to those numerous passages of Scripture, in which repentance, faith, love, etc., are insisted on as being necessary duties. Ah ! here my dear friend, is the source of your mistake—these things are necessary, but they are not qualifications for going to Christ. When the sinner embraces Christ, he does it as a sinner, not on the ground of his being a penitent or a believer. So far as his being accepted is concerned, he has not an inch of footing to take his stand upon in his most intense convictions or his most sincere desires. They are all as nothing, and he is only, when he comes to Christ, a sinner. It is only in his character as a sinner that Christ will receive him. He must strip off every shred of the righteousness of frames, not less than every shred of the righteousness of works. And still, my dear friend, there is many a one who, like yourself, feels that works cannot recommend him to the Saviour ; and yet, right frames ! he thinks he cannot be received without *them*. “If I had repentance !” he cries ; “If I had faith !” What is this, but a subtler kind of self-righteousness ? It is putting our own frames in the place of Christ. ¶I shall for a moment suppose that you are more than justified in your fears, and that you are really not possessed of the least right-heartedness. I shall suppose that your right feeling, which you compare to a spark, is not even a spark, that it is nothing—what then ? Why, then Christ will receive you as willingly as ever, if you go to him. I repeat it : feelings and

frames do not qualify us, cannot recommend us; it is coming, naked and helpless, to the cross, which saves.

And I am prepared, my dear friend, with a reason for this, a reason thoroughly conclusive and altogether glorious, which is, that "the Lord is our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6). When He stood as our Surety, He stood till He wrought all, and suffered all, which was needed to save us. "It is finished!" The man who thinks to procure God's favour by doing penance, or going on pilgrimage, just says, "It is *not* finished; I must add a little of my own." The man who joins his own sincere obedience to Christ's work, and fancies that Christ's righteousness and his, together, shall purchase heaven, just says, "It is *not* finished, I must eke it out with a little of my own." But there is a more dangerous, because more insidious, dishonour we may do to Christ; it is when, on our way to Him, we turn our eye off Him, and fix it on our own frames. You, my dear friend, have not done so in such a way as to flatter yourself and say, "What strong faith I have! what deep penitence!" You have taken just the opposite course, and called your faith and your penitence little and low; but still you have stopped at *them*, instead of going on to Christ. Is this not something like saying, "His work is *not* finished?" Does this not imply that it must be helped out with somewhat of your own? Admitted, that your frames are as defective as you say, if Jesus has paid the full price of our redemption, and borne all our guilt, and brought in all our righteousness, then do not sink in despair because your frames are not what you would have them, but look to Him, and be saved. •

What, then, is the issue to which I would bring you? It is just this—that Christ is all. Desist, my dear friend, from your complaint, that you have not the feelings requisite to being accepted by Him; for if we once come to Him, it does not matter what feelings bring us. Christ saves, Christ alone, and He saves now. He left no part of redemption to be purchased by your state of mind: He has rested no jot of your hopes on anything you may ever feel. He did all which is needed for your acceptance. O what a glorious truth do I find myself asserting! May I not bid you rejoice? May I not invite you to "be covered with the robe of righteousness, and clothed with the garments of salvation?" May I not say to you that your "warfare is accomplished?" What need of further

waiting? What use for any preparation which you have not even now? Behold, and be saved; believe, and live!

After being obliged to express, through so many sentences, different views from your own, I should have liked to have closed by agreeing with you on some sentiment of your letter. But I cannot let one proof you allege in support of your views pass. You say that the way of salvation which I have been enforcing is "too easy." It seems, at all events, to present very serious difficulties to you, my dear friend; and I am persuaded that what you call the "easiness" of it is, in truth, its offence. People would very much rather do something to save themselves than trust simply and solely in Jesus Christ, and this is the stumbling-block at which you have stumbled. You want a more difficult way of salvation, a way which will give you some great thing to do; but when the Gospel comes and says you can do nothing to save yourself, you are disappointed. Too easy! Ah, how difficult the lesson, that even your feelings are naught in the matter of acceptance—that all this much-loved, long-trusted righteousness of yours is naught! But may the Holy Spirit convince you of it, and make you content to be only a beggar at mercy's gate!

THE LAW A SCHOOL-MASTER UNTO CHRIST.

(Heb. x. 4.) Therefore, whilst an Israelite laid his hand upon the head of the innocent victim as it lay upon the Jewish altar, the design was to direct to a nobler blood; so that whilst the natural eye rested upon the sacrifice, it was that the eye of faith should behold afar off the lamb without spot who was slain upon Calvary. Here, then, is an instance of how the law was a school-master to bring men to Christ; and whilst it taught the Israelites what sin was (Rom. v. 20; vii. 13), in demanding such a sacrifice, it at once showed the utter impossibility of being justified by its deeds (Heb. vii. 19); and "these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were

persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. xi. 13). Hence, "the law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. iii. 24). "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master" (ver. 25.) That is, when Christ is come, the object of faith (Heb. x. 9) and the way of salvation is perfectly made known by Him, then we are no longer under a school-master (Lev. xvi. 16). There was no need for the shadow when we had the substance. The sign was lost sight of in the thing signified (Heb. viii. 13). When Christ, who is perfect, was come, then that which was imperfect was done away (John i. 29, 30; Eph. ii. 14, 18). Our Lord says—"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17; iii. 15). The law demanded blood to be shed (Lev. xvii. 11); and Christ, the end of the law, shed blood (John xix. 34; 1 John v. 6, 20), and thus opened a fountain for sin which washed away the blood of every other sacrifice (Heb. x. 18). Hence, "the law," which "is holy" (Rom. vii. 12), was fulfilled by the Lawgiver (John xix. 30), and nothing remains now (Rom. vii. 24, 25; John vi. 28, 29) but to see and believe (Heb. xiii. 10). But we will not believe in Christ. We go on year by year toiling up Mount Sinai to find, and it is not till by painful experience we are brought to see (Hosea ii. 6) that we have been labouring "for that which is not bread" (Isa. lv. 2); that we will abandon our own way by looking to "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John xiv. 6). The sinner feels no need of the sinner's only Refuge till brought to feel that he is burdened with sin, and that all within himself is indeed "vanity and vexation of spirit." How oft we have seen such an one, who has tried all human help but in vain, suddenly arrested by God's Spirit in his career of folly, and just as he was in the height of despair, not knowing what to do or whither to flee, and supposing he shall be left, the disappointed victim of his own error, to go down into "the yawning gulf," he hears afar off a voice calling to him and saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22). "For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12).

THE LITTLE GRAVE.

"It's only a little grave," they said,
 "Only just a child that's dead ;"
 And so they carelessly turned away
 From the mound the spade had made that day.
 Ah ! they did not know how deep a shade
 That little grave in our home had made.

I know the coffin was narrow and small,
 One yard would have served for an ample pall ;
 And one man in his arms could have borne away
 The rosewood and its freight of clay.
 But I know that darling hopes were hid
 Beneath that little coffin-lid.

I know that a mother stood that day
 With folded hands by that form of clay ;
 I know that burning tears were hid
 " 'Neath the drooping lash and aching lid ;"
 And I know her lip, and cheek, and brow
 Were almost as white as her baby's, now.

I know that some things were hid away,
 The crimson frock, and wrappings gay,
 The little sock, and the half-worn shoe,
 The cap with its plumes and tassels blue ;
 And an empty crib, with its covers spread,
 As white as the face of the silent dead.

'Tis a little grave ; but, oh ! have care !
 For world-wide hopes are buried there ;
 And ye, perhaps, in coming years,
 May see, like her, through blinding tears,
 How much of light, how much of joy,
 Is buried up in an only boy !

Count the stars, and the drops, and the leaves, if you can ; and
 when you find you cannot, then think that God can count them all.

Count the sorrows which have been in this world since it began,
 if you can ; and then think, sin made them all.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

JEHOVAH PACIFIED.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 9TH, 1860,
BY THE REV. J. J. WEST, M.A.,

(Rector of Winchelsea, Sussex),

AT CHRIST CHURCH, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, LONDON,

In behalf of the Colonial Church and School Society.

"And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God."—
EZEK. xvi. 62, 63.

THAT word comes with the authority of a "thus saith the Lord;" then, "Let God be true and every man a liar." Now, I was thrown between two Scriptures for a text to preach on; this, the one I am attempting to preach upon, and the other was—(two preceding verses in this same chapter)—"None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee in thy blood, Live." (Ezek. xvi. 5, 6.) The heading of this chapter in the Bible has caught my eye; and these headings of chapters are often very valuable. They are a kind of short annotation on what the chapter contains; and here, "under the similitude of a wretched infant, is showed the natural state of Jerusalem—God's extraordinary love towards her." Why, I might preach a sermon on those words, on that heading of the chapter. And is not this the very origin of all? Do we not here come at once to the fact that we are all "born in sin;" that we are all "shapen in iniquity;" and that, unless we are "born again," or, as it may be rendered, "born from above," we "cannot see the kingdom of God?" Now, my hearers, here we all stand on even ground; we are all vile, all bad; there is no distinction between man and man; we are born, I say, in sin; we are shapen in iniquity. Then, what is it that makes the difference? what is the distinction? What was the distinction made on Calvary's summit-top between two equally abandoned and atrocious thieves? Why was one taken and the other left? Because there was a covenant! Because there was a covenant of grace! My text sets this fact forth. A covenant of grace ordered, and settled, and arranged, and decided on before all worlds; and that covenant is unalterable!

Before I take this text under heads, suffer me to refer to the words of the dying David. What was his comfort in a dying hour? What soothed him on a dying bed? "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) Now, there is the covenant set forth. It is an "everlasting covenant;" it is a covenant "ordered in all things and sure." I need not occupy another moment of my pulpit time in

The Mother's Magazine. October, 1860.

insisting upon the fact that this is so, and that nothing can happen by "chance." "Chance" is the word of the infidel! it is in his dictionary! we will not have it! The covenant is set forth in the Book before me on the cushion; the Book of books, the God of this Book is a covenant God, and has made an everlasting covenant with all his people; and I, as a minister of his gospel, am bound to insist on and to preach this covenant, as declared in the passage now before me—"And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." Now, I would preach on this not as a mere dry doctrine, but insist on it before you practically and experimentally. I want this to be a personal matter with every man and every woman who hears me—with every boy and girl in this church now—Christianity is a personal thing—"Thou art the man." It is either one thing or the other. "And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." Now, in this covenant, the everlasting salvation, and safety, and preservation of every chosen, every elect sinner, every "vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory," is settled and secured. The apostle says, "Vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory;" and this covenant shall be brought into the heart of each redeemed sinner, at Jehovah's appointed time of favour—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Psa. cx. 3.) And mark the force of the pronoun as employed in my text; the personal pronoun—"I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." My hearers, we know something of God by (if I may so speak) his external works—"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." (Psa. xix. 1.) Is not that true? We perceive, we see God, by the wonders of creation—yea, even the smallest blade of grass declares his almighty power, and puzzles and confounds the infidel. Who makes the grass to grow upon the mountain? Who gives us our fields of harvest? Not the farmer! he sows the seed, but God alone commands it to spring up and grow. But do we see God?—Do we know God as a God of grace? as a Saviour? as a Preserver for ourselves? My hearers, this is the point! It can be no consolation to know that there is a Saviour for others. Have we the comfort to know him for ourselves? Are we covetous in this desire? Do we, above all, and beyond every other thing, long to realize the fact that we have been eternally saved in and by him? by the blood of the Saviour? Christ died for the church; and having died for the church, the Holy Ghost, at the appointed time, inclines, and makes each person, for whom Christ did die, to ask and to inquire—"Did he die for me?" And everyone for whom he died shall be taught by the same Spirit to cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

You remember when Jesus Christ, in the midst of his disciples, declared "that one of you shall betray me," how the question was then asked—"Is it I?" "Is it I?" Oh! that now such power might be given to me in preaching, that the silent whisper might run through this church, through these pews, and you be made earnestly to ask yourselves as to your eternal safety in the covenant of grace—"Is it I?" "Is it I?" "Did Christ die for me?" Did he shed his blood for me? Am I redeemed from hell? That is a secret which God alone can whisper into your hearts. Am I here preaching to any carnal worldling? to any unconverted man? You have no power. But there is a sweet word in the opening of the Acts of the Apostles—"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i. 8.) I am preaching here to-night, what I suppose may be called a kind of missionary sermon; and I am a bad beggar. But what a wonderful mission was that of which we hear in this Book—"And he must needs go through Samaria." And as he went that memorable (and, if I may so term it, that missionary) journey, purposely to seek and to save a lost one, how forcibly do we

learn the fact, that the sinner has no power to come to God, or to know the Saviour, except as drawn by grace. In that wonderful interview with the woman of Samaria, that striking word "if"—"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (John iv. 10.) That is no conditional "if;" that is no Arminian "if;" it is no freewill "if;" but it is an "if" declaring the free grace of him "mighty to save." The gift must be bestowed, the power given. You would ask then; you would pray then; you would cry for pardon then. Samaria's wicked woman, living in open sin, knew not then the gift of God. But, oh! Christ loved her then and from everlasting; and, with purposes of love and mercy, "He must needs go through Samaria." Oh! those words—"He must needs go;" they proclaim the gospel. Oh! if I had time to take the whole subject, which I have not—I can only now declare how graciously he bestowed the gift; how he manifested himself; how he convinced her of her sin, and then proclaimed himself to her—"I that speak unto thee am he." Now, we must be brought to a personal understanding of these things. I asked just now, is there a carnal worldling here in this church now? In yourself you have no power, no will, no desire for God, or the things of God. But if it is now a time of mercy to you, God will begin his own work; God will now enable you to receive the gospel; and he will, in that case, put a cry for pardon into your heart, and manifest to you, that the "blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." But the point I started from was this, the sovereign statement of God—"Thou shalt know that I am the Lord." We have a sister passage to this—"And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." (Hosea ii. 19, 20.) Now, my hearers, do we know God as a God in covenant with ourselves? Have we been under the Spirit's teaching? under the conviction of sin? Are we made to feel our vileness—to know our depravity? To beg for mercy at that one door where, when God brings a sinner, that sinner is never sent empty way? "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John x. 9.) But the particular point, as I here draw my bow at a venture, that I would preach on is this, the wonderful free grace fact of a guilty church and a pacified God. And mark the words—"That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." The remembering; the confusion; the stopping of the mouth; and the shame! Oh! have you been brought to this? Are you a professor? It may be you are a noisy one, a talker; there may be much noise, too noisy (as I say often to my own home hearers) like the noisy hound in the pack, he is not to be depended on, and only gets the huntsman's whip. So, my hearers, depend on it, silent Christians are often the best, the most sure. It is a mercy to feel our sins, to be brought to the "stopping of mouths;" and, remembering our own sins, confounded and brought to shame, to cry for pardon, mercy, and forgiveness. Let us take an example in the Bible. That wonderful man, Job—"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 5, 6.) Again, take the instance of the prodigal son; you know his history. What a profligate, what a debauchee he had been—"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want." (Luke xv. 14.) But then he wanted something!

"I want to know the Saviour's love;
I want to fix my heart above;
I want more grace to conquer sin;
I want to feel new life within."

Oh! there is a want, and that want increases the more you see of self. And as you feel sin more and more, so will you want that "blood that cleanseth us from all sin." The prodigal said—"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." (Luke xv. 18, 19.) There was the confession of sin! And here, with the gospel entrusted to my charge, I have authority from the Book before me to proclaim free grace pardon to the very worst of men. If I was to go into the chapel in Newgate, or into your county prison just below, and if the prisoners were all ranged before me—some of them the very scum of London—I should proclaim, with a trumpet tongue, pardon in Christ to the very chief of sinners. Oh! "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (John iv. 10.) And if brought to true and deep repentance; if shame-faced because of sin; if self-abased because of depravity, then there is mercy and pardon for the worst. But I have no offers! I have no general invitations to give to all mankind. I am to preach the gospel to "every creature," and to leave it to the God of Israel to apply the gospel with power to the hearts of his own people. God's command to me is this—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark xvi. 15.) I am to preach it, as it were, to untold millions, if they could now be crammed into this church or anywhere else. I am to proclaim salvation by blood and love to the guiltiest of the guilty! Oh! what a wonderful idea is that of Kent, in reference to the covenant of grace!

"Grace had secur'd in Jesus then,
Millions untold of chosen men."

And now, my hearers, amongst those millions, are you one in him? Am I one in him? Did Christ die for me? Are we secured in Christ against world, flesh, sin, and devil? Are you one amongst the millions saved? Paul, writing to Titus, says—"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus ii. 14.) And the church is composed of "peculiar" persons—"A peculiar people, zealous of good works." Are you one of that peculiar people? Have you the peculiarity of truth put into your heart by the power of the Holy Ghost? That is where grace brings a sinner. I began by preaching to you the covenant. I place the eternal covenant before you. I proclaim the act of God (if I may so speak) for the safety of his church. Christ "came to seek and to save that which was lost." I was preaching to some of you the other evening, in another church, upon that wonderful case of the extortioner, Zacchæus—"Make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house." Now, is there a Zacchæus before me here? Is there any notoriously guilty man or guilty woman assembled in this house of prayer? Do you feel your sin? Do you feel prostrated on account of the depravity that is in you? Do you remember! looking back on past days, and on all you have said, and done, and thought? Oh! what a mass of iniquity you are! Are you brought to a sense of shame? are you confounded? You can't get to heaven by your own works. You can't get to heaven by moral conduct. Mark that! Salvation is by grace without works. "What is your authority for that?" somebody asks. I will give it you—"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Now, my hearers, if salvation depended even upon the raising of a finger, if the lifting up of a finger tended in the least degree to help us in the salvation of our souls, we should boast of it directly. Man can do nothing to save himself. Listen to me! There is One Man that has done all; and our safety all hinges and hangs upon that—"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Christ finished it. You have nothing to do. But the grace that he puts into his people enables them to do those things that are pleasing in his sight. In the chapter succeeding the one that we heard read in Hebrews, these words occur—"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." (Heb xiii. 9.) It is a most blessed thing "not to be carried about with divers and strange doctrines" which are now abounding; but to have the heart (mark that, my hearers), to have "the heart established with grace." Now, is not this a melting Scripture? See how Jehovah speaks to his church. Jerusalem here stands as the picture and type of God's elect; and she is brought by the power of God to remember her sinful state, to be confounded, and never to open her mouth any more, because of her shame. But what is the thing he lays upon her heart? Even himself, as a pacified God in Christ Jesus towards her. Oh! there is nothing like the rule of love. There is nothing like the power and rule that governs by lovingkindness. Look at it on the cross—"Father, forgive them, for they know not

what they do." There is love! And again—"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is a proclamation of mercy—"Whosoever believeth." And "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." But who looked up at the brazen serpent? Only the bitten Israelite! It was the sting which made them look and long for healing. And so it is when sin stings and iniquity is felt, that the sin-bitten sinner casts up a look to Jesus, and trusting in his finished work, pleads that sweet Litany petition—"By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, good Lord deliver us." Oh! what holy prayer is that! How well the church prays! But man cannot plead that "agony."—Man cannot name that "bloody sweat."—We cannot name the cross, nor the passion, nor any other plea, till the Holy Ghost has come into our heart, convinced us of our own sins, and pointed us to him who died to redeem his people. Man has no power; man has no wish; man has nothing in himself. But when God brings a sinner to "remember" his ways, to confusion and to silence because of shame, then, like the thief, when found in the hand of the policeman, he has nothing to say, because of guilt. But mark those words in the text—"When I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." Oh! that mercy, that love! That lovingkindness in forgiving sin and in restoring sinners—

"He saw me ruin'd in the fall,
Yet lov'd me notwithstanding all;
He sav'd me from my lost estate,
His lovingkindness, oh! how great."

And again—(take it practically)—

"When trouble like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood,
His lovingkindness, oh! how good."

Beloved, mark his lovingkindness! Now, why this distinction to any man? Because his name is written in the Lamb's book of life; registered in that book where every name of each and all of God's children is enrolled. Have you ever read, or tried to read your name there? Have you made a search?

"When I can read my title clear,
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to all my fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

Depend on it, my hearers, the general spot where we find God's people is in a seeking state, inquiring, "Am I one for whom Christ died?" Now, mark this picture in the text; see Jehovah a "pacified" God. He who is full of vengeance against sin, is, nevertheless, to "his own elect," a "pacified God." Oh! those words—as addressed to each humbled, sin-confounded, and shame faced sinner—"When I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." A "pacified" God! Peace made between God and guilty man! Now, see what the apostle says, as to the sinner being brought to the stopping of mouths—"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 19, 20.) Now, have you, I ask each one who hears me, have you undergone a law work in your own soul? By this, I mean simply what the apostle says—"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. iii. 24.) That law we can never keep. For the apostle James says—"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James ii. 10.) Hence there can be no salvation by the deeds of the law. But when that law has brought you and me to the stopping of mouths, then we begin to cry for peace and for pardon to him who has, in his own person, obeyed that law voluntarily in every iota of it, and kept it for his people, that they may be saved through him for ever, from its condemning curse and power.—And if the cry is in our heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner," that is a test and that is the spot where God brings everyone of his own people. Now to go back to a great passage in this chapter—"None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee in thy blood, Live; yea,

I said unto thee in thy blood, Live." (Ezek. xvi. 5, 6.) There is the beginning of the work, my hearers! And the solemn point for each of you to ascertain for yourselves is this—"Am I one?" have I had the commanded word spoken to me, "Live?" Here will be the test—"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John vi. 45.) "Cometh unto me," to Christ as a Saviour, with a cry in the heart for mercy and for that pardoning love that shall be the eternal portion of all, and each, and everyone of those for whom Christ died upon the cross. Now, here we are, my hearers, assembled together in the service of the church. I am preaching before you, and you are sitting assembled here to hear me. But does the gospel penetrate your hearts? Do you bear in mind, my hearers, that there is a solemn instant when we must die? Here is the end of all our preaching and your hearing. I believe there is no subject more tending to practical good to God's people, than the subject of death, to be reminded that you must die. We may die in a moment! Can we take up the words of the apostle—"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?" (2 Cor. v. 1.) Here is the end of it all! We must die! I have often said before, to you men in London, that you seem to be occupied in such a whirl of business, so incessantly engaged. Have you to-day had a solemn thought of eternity? Have you remembered what Paul says—"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment?" Has Christ by his grace sent a word into your soul? Have you found out the secret that there is nothing for the Christian man upon earth but a continuation of trials and troubles? Has Christ spoken to you as he did to his early church—"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John xvi. 33.) But herein is the distinction between the church and the world; between the possessor and the professor. It is the possessor that is tried, and troubled, and tempted by the way. Those crosses! How often do you and I say, "Not so, my Father?" And you would have your own way, but you cannot; and what a mercy that you can't. Joseph wanted to have his way, but he could not—"Not so, my Father!" But what said the patriarch? "I know, my son, I know." And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.)

"We need as much the cross we bear,
As air we breathe, as light we see;
It draws us to thy side in prayer,
It binds us to our strength in thee."

Do you know anything of that drawing? Oh! nothing is so healthy to the child of God as the cross. Some one has well said—"Cross bearers shall be crown wearers." Do not call me a narrow-minded man! I love to proclaim the gospel to unnumbered thousands! But how few there are that seem to be alive to all that an experimental gospel sets forth for every man into whose heart it is brought with power. Temptations, trials mark his path. That 12th chapter of Hebrews set the truth before you from the desk. It is the chastening of God; it is the trials of the way; it is being brought into trouble that makes the Saviour so precious. Look at the character so constantly set before us in the Book of Psalms—"The poor and needy;" and the cry that we see there also continually when the soul is in exercise and in distress—"Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah." (Psa. lxxvii. 8, 9.) And yet you and I tremble when a trouble comes; you and I rebel against it. And yet—"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13.) Mark the mercy! "He will make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." And in the opening verses of that chapter, Heb. xii.—"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii. 1, 2.) Look at that cloud of witnesses; those that are gone to heaven before us; they were all troubled; they were all tried; they were all exercised. There isn't an instance of a saved sinner in the Bible who had a smooth path; they were all in the mire and clay. And so it must be with us. And hence the apostle urges upon the Hebrew church—"Let us lay aside every weight, and the

sin which doth so easily beset." You have all got a besetting sin. Yours may not be mine, nor mine yours, but "let us run with patience the race that is set before us." How are we to run with patience? "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." "The joy that was set before the Saviour when he endured the cross, despising the shame." And you must taste a something of that cross—"For if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me." Consider the cloud of witnesses, think of the saints who have gone before us to glory, and then take courage. Oh! trust God where we can't trace him. For "blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Jehovah is." Now, my hearers, what do you and I know of being so convinced of our sins; and so convinced of them, that we have no peace and no comfort in our own souls, till we see God a "pacified" God towards us? Look at the gospel—"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." No charge against the church in the gospel. But that law of the ten commandments passes on everyone of us the sentence of eternal death. But the gospel proclaims peace and pardon; and why are you and I brought to see this which other persons can't see? Why are you and I (if it be so) set free from a legal state of bondage? The apostle tells us—"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Take it in its grammar sense—"Not because ye shall be, but because ye are sons;" that is the full sense of it. "Because ye have been sons in the eternal covenant from all eternity." Therefore that is the cause why God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. And the first cry and the first prayer under the constraining of the Spirit, is for mercy and for pardon. The first work of the Spirit upon the soul is a conviction of sin; and when you and I are under a conviction of sin, then there is a cry for pardon; the publican's cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And when we see the length, and the depth, and the height and breadth of our own depravity, and are taught the exceeding sinfulness of sin in ourselves; when we are made to feel our own depravity, then the soul, new born by the Holy Spirit, is pointed to him "mighty to save,"—and we long after the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Now, what do you and I know of this? We must have truth from the pulpit, and men of truth in the pulpit. It is of no use to preach what is called a flowery or an eloquent sermon. Eloquence at the bar; eloquence in the House of Commons is all very well; let them have it in Parliament. But here we want the home thrusts of truth; and with truth preached, we want the power to seal it on and in the heart—"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." What says the word?—"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John vi. 44.) And when a sinner is so drawn to God, he is prostrated, cast down, ashamed, because of sin, depravity, corruption. The system of the day in which we live, is a "do, do," system. But the gospel, faithfully preached, is a declaration of the truth that man can do nothing. That is the work of Almighty God himself! It is what Christ has done for him! "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32.) And again—"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.) Now, my hearers, before I finish, I am to plead for this society—I never beg on any occasion. I would only put the fact before you. It is, as I understand it, a society simply to carry out the services and doctrines of our church in the colonies; and, therefore, wherever this society sends a servant, there must there be heard two chapters in the Bible. Now, the reading of God's word is a great thing, to say nothing of preaching. Those two chapters may be heard with power, and a blessing, to some poor, depraved, abandoned sinner in those parts of the world. There is a promise! a promise for a blessing on the simple reading of God's word. And at times that promise is fulfilled—"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. lv. 11.) And then see the effects of that word! What an encouragement! "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." (Isa. lv. 13.) Look at the distinction; instead of the thorn the fir tree, instead of the brier the myrtle tree! You men in London may not know the difference between these trees as a countryman does. One is a wild bush growing in the hedges—you do not see them in Fleet Street, or in

Holborn, or in the Strand, but you would see them in the country; and instead of the thorn, and instead of the brier, shall come up the fir and the myrtle tree. Mark the difference! I cannot enter fully into the subject of this society, but in our colonies where it carries on its operations there is something encouraging in the fact that God's word must be read. Now, consider the simple fact! Your pastor this evening has read in the service two chapters, and that word must here accomplish God's purpose. We churchmen must always have three sermons; two in the desk, and these are always faithful, and there must be something also in the pulpit. Is it not, then, important to send out the word of our God to the colonies? I own I like to think that the beautiful and scriptural form of prayer of the Church of England is heard in those parts of the world where this society sends its servants. In pleading for this society to-night I would only say, may the King of kings open your hearts just as he sees fit. But let not this subject drive out from your minds those great subjects that I have been preaching on. The covenant; the knowing the Lord; the being confounded under a sense of sin; the stopping of the mouth; and the shame; and above all, that great part of my subject, the rejoicing of a sinner's heart when enabled to see the fact for himself; even that God is a "pacified God" toward him for all that he has done. Now let me put this before you in illustration. Suppose some one offends you, does you a great injury, and instead of returning evil for evil, you forgive him kindly, you forgive him freely, thus "you heap coals of fire on his head"—it melts his heart. And now mark our guilt, our sin, our rebellion against God; and, oh! if we can have a little hope only that he is a "pacified" God towards us for all that we have done! And how pacified? All in Christ for his sake alone and only. All our offences pardoned; all our sins blotted out; the sins of boyhood, of manhood, and of older years; and we, subdued by grace and brought down to his footstool, made to cry for that pardoning love and mercy which he puts into the heart of every poor beggar towards whom he is "pacified." This cry is the effect of his own grace marking the fact—"None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee in thy blood, Live." (Ezek. xvi. 5, 6.)

"The gospel comes with welcome news,
To sinners lost like me;
Their various schemes let others choose,
Saviour! I come to thee."

Oh! those blessed words of Christ—"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) Oh! Christ will have the purchase of his agonies and groans; and when he appears again, may we be amongst the number of whom he will say, "Gather the wheat into my barn." Now, my hearers, this is the message God has given me; may it be blessed so to you, that it may be a "savour of life unto life." The gospel can never fail of triumph. We triumph wherever we go; whether as a "savour of death unto death, or a savour of life unto life." And "who is sufficient for these things?" Whether the gospel preached in this church to-night, be to some a savour of death unto death (it may be so to some), or whether it be a savour of life unto life, "who is sufficient for these things?" My hearers, consider the passage in my text; search, "examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith;" and by the test of this Scripture, see whether you have really a feeling sense of your own sinfulness; whether you have been made to remember your state; whether a cry has been and is still heard from your soul. Remember Christ is the only Saviour. His "blood cleanseth us from all sin." But that blood must be applied with power; and we must be washed in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. If this is not so; if there is one here not in Christ, not washed in his precious blood, if so, there is nothing before that man but eternal damnation. And now I must stop! Christ has now been preached fully before you. I can only ask, have you a hope that God in Christ is a "pacified" God toward you for all that you have done? May the Holy Spirit now perform his work amongst you; and when my tongue ceases preaching, may he take of the things of Jesus and show them unto you. I will now read the text—"And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." (Ezekiel xvi. 62, 63.) There is the peculiarity of this text—"When I am "pacified" toward thee for all that thou hast done saith the Lord God." May God bless his own word, and carry it with power to your hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen, amen.

THE LATE REV. ALEX. FLETCHER, D.D.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IN all probability there are but few, if any, of the readers of this Magazine who have not heard of the departure from our midst, at the call of the Master, of Dr. Alexander Fletcher, the honoured pastor of Finsbury Chapel, the prince of preachers to the young, and, by his works, the eminent promoter of household piety. We shall not shortly look upon his like again; and remembering the aids he afforded to the Mothers of England in the discharge of their most sacred and difficult duties to their offspring, it is felt to be but fitting that in these pages we should offer one of the many tributes of sincere affection and reverence that will be paid to his memory, not only by the Christian people of England, but of all lands where the English language is spoken. For fifty years and more he was a "burning and a shining light" in this still very dark world, and was made by Providence an unspeakable blessing to countless multitudes. And "being dead he yet speaketh," and will continue to speak for generations to come by means of the words he wrote and fixed in imperishable type, as well as by the living monuments of his ministry. It is too often true that "the evil which men do lives after them," while "the good" deeds that should be set to their account are "interred with their bones." But in the case of "a good minister of Jesus Christ," who laboured through a long career to promote the best interests of men, and worthily "adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour" by his life—the holy influences he set a-going, and that were felt while he lived, shall never cease to be exerted while human beings dwell upon the earth. Truly did Dr. Macfarlane say of Dr. Fletcher, in the funeral discourse that he preached in Finsbury Chapel, to a great concourse of mourners, that imagination could not conceive the degree of spiritual blessing which faith and reason combined to say must have followed the labours of this devoted servant of the Most High God, whose supreme desire it was to show unto men the way of salvation, especially did he long to win the affections of the little ones to Jesus; feeling assured that—

"A flower when offered in the bud,
Is no vain sacrifice."

And knowing well that "to mind religion young" is the surest means of happiness, as well in this world as in the world to come. Dr. Fletcher also possessed a warm, natural love for children, which discovered itself in the very tones of his voice, and in the words that he used when addressing them. This, doubtless, it was that constituted the basis and strength of that "talent approaching to genius" for speaking to children and youth, of which Mr. Binney spoke, in his oration at Abney Chapel, over the coffin of the deceased. The instruction of the rising race in the things of Heaven was a passion with him, and to them his best efforts were consecrated from first till last. When quite a youth himself he began to tell of the wonders of redeeming love to companies of children, and he never ceased to do so while life remained. His last sermon was preached to a gathering of some three thousand children, in Surrey Chapel, where, nearly fifty years before, at the request of the good Rowland Hill, he preached his first similar sermon in London. But that discourse, and the one delivered on Christmas-day, 1859, "The Garments of Salvation," were but the impressive conclusion of an annual series begun half a century before on the banks of the Teith. There, on a green sward, under a blue sky, and, by a classic stream, he often addressed troops of children as numerous as ever assembled beneath the roof of Finsbury Chapel. But, though best known, his sermons to the young were by no means the only, if the chief, service he rendered to that portion of the community, for his first and his last books had reference to them; and in the preparation of his great work,

Mother's Magazine. November, 1860.

the "Guide to Family Devotion," it is probable that he was thinking as much, at least, of the younger as of the elder members of the households he desired to assist in their daily prayers and thanksgivings to our heavenly Father. Dr. Macfarlane drew a graphic and touching picture of the meeting in paradise of the departed veteran with the multitude of those who had gone before him, who, as children, had been led to Calvary, and thence to glory everlasting, through his instrumentality. It was a scarcely less interesting sight to behold Dr. Fletcher on a Sabbath afternoon at the head of his own "Catechetical Seminary," than to see him addressing the united schools. Within a very short time after his settlement in the Metropolis he began this "Seminary"—a high order of Bible class; and so devoted was his attention to it that it became quite a famous institution, and very attractive to a large proportion of the youth of his flock. For many years, even during the period when his services were in most urgent request for purposes outside of his own church, he kept rigidly to the performance of the duties which he had imposed upon himself by the establishment of this most useful Seminary, and would allow nothing to keep him away from it. He was, happily, able to discharge his usual duties up to within less than a year of his decease, and it was only seven months ago since he appeared in Surrey Chapel, as we have said; and if not in triumph, yet in "perfect peace" he fell asleep in Jesus, and devout men and women, and hundreds of children, followed his remains to their burial in the beautiful cemetery of Abney Park, where they shall rest till the heavens be no more, and the earth shall give up her dead, when he, and all the ransomed of the Lord, shall experience the consummation of their bliss. But, as Mr. Binney beautifully observed in the funeral oration—to which we have already alluded, and publish verbatim in the following pages—"our brother is not dead." On the contrary, "he is more alive now than he ever was; more full of life, understands better what it is to live than we think, having entered into the world of life, and blessedness, and joy." The eye of faith can pierce the veil, and may exclaim in the fervid language of a devout American poet—

"On yonder shore to greet him,
I saw a shining throng;
Some just begun their praising,
Some had been praising long;
With joy they bade him welcome,
And struck their harps again,
While through the heavenly arches
Peal'd the triumphal strain.

"Now in a robe of glory,
And with a starry crown,
I saw the weary Pilgrim
With Kings and Priests sit down;
With Prophets, Patriarchs, Martyrs,
And Saints a countless throng,
He chants his great deliverance
In never ceasing song."

We shall now proceed to give our readers a more detailed account of the Life and Ministry of this honoured and now glorified servant of God.

Biographical Sketch.

BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND EDUCATION.

ALEXANDER FLETCHER was born on the 10th of April, 1788, at the Bridge of Teith, near the picturesque village of Doune, Perthshire. His father, the Rev. WILLIAM FLETCHER, was, for nearly half a century, the minister of the Secession, now United Presbyterian, Church of that place, planted there by the founder of the denomination, the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, of Stirling. His mother, Jean Gilfillen, was the daughter of the Secession minister at the Bridge of Firth, Dumblane, whose father, like her husband, long time laboured in the ministry of the Word. He occupied his one sphere for more than fifty years, and was greatly blessed in his sacred work. Alexander's eminently pious parents devoted him to the Christian ministry at an early age, and he was sent to a grammar school at Stirling, under the tuition of Dr. David Doeg, one of the most celebrated classic scholars of his day. And it is said that even in his schoolboy days young Fletcher had acquired the habit of making pious addresses to little children and those of his own age; and the tradition is, that he even then displayed evident indications of those peculiar powers which were destined, for more than forty subsequent years, to make his name pleasingly familiar to all the large Nonconformist Sunday Schools of the English Metropolis; and, by means of the press, to a great proportion of the schools throughout the land, and to many also beyond these islands. At the early age of ten years he was sent to the University of Glasgow, and making rapid progress in his learning, entered, when fifteen, the Divinity Hall, under the Rev. Dr. Lawson, of Selkirk. After four years' study he received his licence to preach from his own presbytery, and was thus regularly united to the Associate Synod.

EARLY MINISTERIAL DAYS.

He preached his first sermon on the last Sabbath in December, in the year 1806, in his father's pulpit, taking for his text Isaiah xxvi. 1—3, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah. We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nations which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Quickly becoming the most popular and promising young preacher in the Secession body, he received several invitations from vacant churches in different parts of Scotland; but he naturally and wisely gave the preference to what has been styled "his native congregation;" and in September, 1807, he was ordained at the Bridge of Teith as his venerable father's colleague and successor. But the Master had other and ample work for him to do in a more conspicuous part of the vineyard.

APPEARANCE IN THE ENGLISH METROPOLIS.

The pulpit of the Presbyterian Chapel in Miles's Lane fell vacant, and young Fletcher, then in his twenty-second or twenty-third year, was sent up by the Synod as the ministerial supply, whether as a "probationer" for the office is not certain; but from the fact that he at first refused the call of the congregation with much

persistency, it is inferred that his design was, in any case, to return to his Scottish charge. It was on the first Sabbath in July, in the year 1810, that he appeared, for the first time, in Miles's Lane, when he preached from Romans xvi. 24—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." He occupied the pulpit for two months, and, during the same period, supplied Hoxton Academy Chapel every Thursday evening, as well as preached in some other places. The Elders of Miles's Lane Church were doubtful, at the outset, of the wisdom of the Synod in sending up to them so youthful a minister; and, it is said, one of them shook his head, and prophesied the speedy departure of all who remained of the fast-retreating congregation; but instead of this, the prescribed period of his service had not elapsed before the name of the young Scotchman was in everybody's mouth, and the almost-deserted chapel became crowded to excess. No wonder the managers of the place were now anxious to secure his settlement among them; and it might have been supposed that the dazzling prospect which seemed to be opening up to the preacher, would have made refusal next to impossible. It is certain, however, that he declined the overtures, and returned to Scotland, considerably impaired in health. In this latter circumstance, it is probable may be found the main, if not the sole cause, of his disinclination to remain in the English metropolis. Happily, by the blessing of God, his powers of body were speedily restored to him, and after the lapse of some six months from his leaving London, a second call was sent to him from the Miles's Lane Church, and as it was seconded by the Synod, and supported in the powerful persuasions of many friends on whose soundness of judgment he had reason to rely, it was then accepted.

BECOMING THE PASTOR OF MILES'S LANE CHURCH.

Mr. Fletcher's pastoral relation to the church, whose invitation he had thus at length complied with, was recognized in November, 1811, when the then all-powerful Dr. Waugh delivered an eloquent and appropriate charge, which was subsequently published. The service was apparently of the nature of a second ordination, under the auspices of the Presbytery of London. In a letter written about this time, by the late Mrs. Winslow, mother of the Rev. Octavius Winslow, D.D., of Bath, that excellent lady relates that she went to a chapel in Lincoln's Inn Fields to hear Mr. Fletcher, and she says, "Though the chapel was a large one, it was densely crowded." "Although only twenty-three," Mrs. Winslow adds, "he possesses such uncommon power in directing and fixing the attention of both old and young, that I do not believe the eyes of either were off him during the whole service." It is not surprising that such a preacher should have been sought for in all directions to conduct special services, to be followed by collections; and hence it appears that he was following his vocation with zeal and acceptance, in one place and another, every day of the week, despite the churlish criticisms of the feeble religious press at the time, and heedless of the advice given to him by the editor of the *New Evangelical Magazine*, "to return to Jericho, and remain there till his beard was grown." As "a thorn in the flesh," perhaps, sent to save him from being "exalted above measure," were the bitter taunts of old William Jones, the editor in question, who was not the man to be careful to spare his Sandemanian bill when a popular young Scotchman was in the case; for he was a keen controversialist, and, like most individuals of that mischief-making order, never so happy as when engaged in an onslaught upon his brethren.

ERECTION OF ALBION CHAPEL.

Mr. Fletcher's popularity soon overtasked the capacity of the original chapel, which was situated near London Bridge, and in a narrow street, as its name implied; and after his removal from it, continued to be used till 1838, when it was pulled down. This was twenty-two years from the period of his first occupancy of the pulpit, and

he was invited to preach the last sermon within its walls, which he did to an exceedingly crowded congregation, from the same text upon which he discoursed when entering upon his public duties in that place. Scarcely twelve months had gone by, before it was found that the Miles's-Lane edifice was insufficient for the accommodation of the congregation that used to assemble at every service; and the managers, rising with the occasion, took steps for the erection of a more commodious building, but some time elapsed before the project was accomplished. The foundation stone of Albion chapel, Moorgate, was laid by Dr. Waugh, in the month of November, 1815, and in exactly a year afterwards the place was opened—the Rev. Dr. Waugh preaching in the morning, and the Rev. W. Jay, of Bath, in the evening. Here for some seven or eight years, Mr. Fletcher continued to minister to full congregations, and with undoubted usefulness to many, especially to the young, for whom, as we shall have occasion to remark more fully, by-and-bye, his style of address was peculiarly suited.

PAINFUL OCCURRENCES; CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL LAW.

In the very midst of his fame it was that the cloud to which the Rev. Thomas Binney alludes in the accompanying address, passed over his history, and threatened, but happily only threatened, to veil his future prospects and usefulness in deep and perpetual gloom. The actual occurrences, however, were not calculated to produce so disastrous an effect; but his enemies did everything they could to exaggerate the facts; and in affairs of the affections the world is never slow to accept the most outrageous reports, and that in preference to the simple and true statements. It happened thus: While Alexander Fletcher was yet a Glasgow student he became attached to a young lady in that city, the daughter of a gentleman into whose house students, it would seem, were accustomed to be received. After his removal several things contributed to prevent the courtship going further, but the fault rested chiefly with the lady herself and the father, who entertained some old grudge against the Fletchers, and desired his daughter to marry some one who had a greater prospect of worldly wealth than Alexander had at that time. Ten years passed away, and during the whole period no communication passed between them. Then he had got into a good and promising position in London, and the friends of the lady, if not the lady herself, sought most diligently to have the acquaintance renewed, and such were the representations made to Mr. Fletcher of the ardent love that was felt towards him, that in an evil hour he consented to be again the suitor for the hand of a person who was quite unworthy of him. In a short time he was disposed to make her his wife, and arranged for the lady to come up to him to London; but again the parents interfered, and represented that his income was not sufficient. It was then four hundred pounds a year; but one hundred pounds per annum Alexander sent annually to his father and mother, "as a small testimony of the high admiration in which he held their virtues and their graces," and which he continued to do till their death. The lady, listening to the counsels of her father in this matter, it was surely not surprising that Mr. Fletcher should begin to credit the representations made to him by his sisters and other intimate friends, that she felt not the proper affections towards him. But still he refused not to fulfil his declared intentions. Previous, however, to the time when the union was to have taken place, he discovered that his most private letters to his correspondent had been handed about by her connivance, and got into all sorts of hands, which, with other things coming to light, made him begin to hesitate; and it was then that "Eliza" and her parents "insisted upon the fulfilment of the engagement." Mr. Fletcher urgently sought to have the matter settled by arbitration; but this arrangement was scouted, and an action laid in the English courts of law. Upon its coming on for hearing a compromise was accepted by the prosecutors. But they were not content with these persecutions to which they had subjected the young man, for "Envy has no holidays," and delivered up the documents which had been prepared for the civil action, to the

ecclesiastical tribunal to which he was amenable. These functionaries took up the case, and greatly influenced, it would seem, by the father of the lady, himself a reverend doctor, rashly and cruelly cut him off from the body. Application was next made to the Court of Chancery for an injunction against him, to restrain him from preaching, which was refused. At length, but not for several years, he fairly triumphed, and began an address of congratulation and thankfulness to his people, who had stood by him, in the words of the poet Campbell—

“Auspicious hope! In thy sweet garden grow
Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every woe.
When wrapt in fire, the realms of æther glow,
And heaven’s last thunder shakes the world below,
Thou, undismayed, shall o’er the ruins smile,
And light thy torch at nature’s funeral pile.”

Within the last few years, Dr. Fletcher was kindly and lovingly received back to that ecclesiastical relationship, from which most unprejudiced persons, who knew the facts of the case, were of the decided opinion he ought never to have been excluded.

PUBLIC OPINION: THE ERECTION OF FINSBURY CHAPEL.

So far from being deserted in this time of trial, multitudes of new friends flocked about him, and the first stone of the noble edifice known as Finsbury Chapel was laid by Mr. Fletcher himself, who had now taken the degree of M.A., and subsequently of D.D., from the Glasgow University,—assisted by the Rev. Joseph Irons, Rev. G. Williams, of Gate Street Chapel, Rev. G. C. Smith, of Penzance (universally known as “Boatswain Smith,” who is still alive), and others. On that occasion, Mr. Fletcher produced a gold trowel, which he said was the gift of the richest house in London, or, perhaps, in Europe. The most authentic report of the cost of the erection of Finsbury Chapel is, that the sum actually expended was a little over £10,000. It was opened for public service on Wednesday, the 6th of December, 1826, when two sermons were preached, that in the morning by the Rev. Dr. Collyer, from Genesis xxviii., latter part of the 17th verse; and in the evening by Mr. Drake, of Cambridge, from Psalm lxiii. 3; reading before the sermon, 1 Kings viii., and Ephesians iv. Between the exodus from Albion Chapel, and the opening of the new edifice in Finsbury Circus, the congregation had worshipped in Grub Street Chapel, now Milton Street, but from which the place of worship has been long since absent; and, before its disappearance, was occupied as a play-house, and used to boast the presence of the redoubtable Charles Kean. Finsbury Chapel appears to have excited almost as much notice at the time of its erection as is now given to the enormous edifice being built by Mr. Spurgeon. Not that any parallel could be instituted between the popularity of the two men, or between the respective qualities and circumstances concerning their individual celebrity. But if Mr. Fletcher was unable to summon to his aid so general a repute as that in which Mr. Spurgeon’s ministrations at Exeter Hall and Surrey Gardens have caused him to be held, his project, though bold, required only a third of the sum to be expended upon “The Metropolitan Tabernacle.” And yet it was so far beyond ordinary necessities, and the internal resources of an individual congregation, that the energy and perseverance shown on the occasion, and the happy results with which they were concerned, were in themselves adapted to beget confidence in the man who had exhibited so vigorous a spirit. It deserves also to be remarked, that the time when this spacious, central, and convenient chapel was completed, was singularly opportune. Exeter Hall did not yet exist; and all denominations of Nonconformists engaged in home and foreign missions, were feeling the want of a building sufficiently comfortable, and sufficiently large to accommodate the multitudes who crowded to their anniversary meetings. Finsbury Chapel was just the thing required. It suited the convenience of both parties, lenders and borrowers, that it should be available for

these annual purposes. Mr. Fletcher, though without feeling himself to be a "sneaking sinner," after Mr. Spurgeon's manner, did not refrain from preaching till he could clear off the debt; and yet he afforded the occasional use of it to others on terms so moderate, that, long after the costly, high-rented Hall was opened in the Strand, his chapel was, and is still, preferred by committees who do not hope to attract the West-enders, or whose means are not equal to the hazards of so costly an experiment. While his building-fund was deriving a moderate advantage from the arrangement, it enabled him to appear a sympathiser, if not almost a patron, of nearly every society in London established for the spread of the gospel, the claims of humanity, or the advancement of religious liberty; and many of us call to mind the radiant face of the resident minister, seldom absent, and always expected, on these occasions.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

The mention of the radiant face of the good Doctor naturally calls for one or two observations on some of the personal characteristics by which he was distinguished. Those who knew him in his prime, retain a lively impression of the Finsbury Pastor as a fine, fresh-looking man, of goodly presence and ready speech, yet expressing himself, as he did to the last, with a broad Scotch accent, which, though hard to southern ears, doubtless to multitudes of Caledonian residents in London, would be as cold waters to a thirsty soul, or good news from a far country. He was no platform speaker, and rarely, if ever, appeared before the public in that character, certainly not of late years. No one could be in his presence for half an hour and not feel well assured that he possessed a warm and generous disposition, and would go far to serve a friend, and think no labour too great to save a soul from death. As one proof of the fatherly interest which he took in the rising ministry, of whatever denomination, it may be mentioned that he was an early and avowed friend of Mr. Spurgeon, and continued so to the end of his own life, through good report and evil. The learned laureate of religious meetings—Mr. Joseph Payne, now Assistant Judge at the criminal court—has thus commemorated the warm friendship hereafter to be renewed in heaven:—

"Oh! it doth glad one's heart to see
The union prized by all,
Of Park Street Chapel's Timothy
With Finsbury Chapel's Paul."

It is now remembered with melancholy pleasure, that Dr. Fletcher married the great preacher of the day, and preached for him at New Park Street when unmanned by the terrible catastrophe at Surrey Gardens. Had he lived a few months longer, he would have celebrated his own jubilee, and seen his young friend installed in his new Tabernacle.

DR. FLETCHER AS A PREACHER TO THE YOUNG.

Without at all detracting from his fame, it may truly be said that, as a preacher, Dr. Fletcher never rose to the first rank, except in his own peculiar walk. "Dr. Chalmers," says Dr. Macfarlane, the eloquent author of the "Night Lamp," "used to say, that he was the Wilkie of preaching;" meaning that what Wilkie had done to popularize the fine arts, Dr. Fletcher did to render preaching intelligible and attractive to the young. He acquired the title of the Prince of Preachers to Children, bestowed upon him by Dr. Leifchild; and those persons who have repeatedly enjoyed the pleasure of hearing him address a numerous audience of Sunday Scholars at Whitsuntide or Christmas, can testify how well he merited a distinction which the best of us might covet. Let him who said "Suffer little children to come unto me;" who added, as the reason, "For of such is the kingdom of God;" who laid upon the most impetuous of his disciples the gentle duty of "feeding his lambs;" who, on various

occasions, declared his tender concern for the "little ones;" and who specially revealed the fact that in "heaven their angels do always behold the face of his Father,"—let our Lord himself, we say, instruct us in the honour due to the minister who makes the souls of children his peculiar care. The mere attempt implies personal qualities of the most endearing kind, and its successful accomplishment sets a seal upon the character of the individual as a man of pure affections and cheerful temper, endowed with rare persuasive faculties, and embarking upon a career of Christian usefulness at the very fount and spring. By his Christmas sermon to the Sunday Schools, begun in 1835, and continued thenceforward throughout his long life, he became known as such, he said, not only all over England, but throughout the civilized world; and on last Christmas morning he was almost as well able to rivet the attention of the thousands then congregated in Finsbury Chapel, as he had been to engage the thoughts of the children of two previous generations on corresponding occasions. The secret of his power in the pulpit, and with the young especially, doubtless consisted largely in the fact that every sentence which fell from his lips seemed to gush forth warm from the heart, and because of the exceeding simplicity of his utterance.

CONSIDERED AS AN AUTHOR.

Dr. Fletcher was not only a preacher, as everybody who knew him, and many besides, are aware, but a writer of many books; and the numerous practical treatises which domestic piety owes to his fluent pen, attest the strain as well as prove the efficiency of his pastoral teaching. His writings fill no fewer than twenty volumes, some large, some small, but every one bearing closely, if not reclining, upon those aspects which Christianity presents, or those requirements which it suggests, in connection with the family and the household. The list begins with an "Address to the Young," and ends with a "Warning to Evil Speakers." We find among them no "three-volume novel;" but, in two instances, that is the number of the set; and these, his most voluminous works, are his "Sabbath School Preacher," and his "Sermons adapted for Children." But, if we would have "the sincere milk of the Word," "milk for babes," we must look for it in his single volume of "Short Sermons for Children." As the little ones expand into little men and women, he follows them with his "Spiritual Guardian for Youth," and, to encourage them to volunteer for Christ, he sets before them the supports as well as the difficulties, the honours as well as the trials, of the "Christian Conqueror." As youthful ardour develops itself, and the individual becomes conscious of mental appetites which mere morals, though in a philosophy truly Divine, will not wholly satisfy, he guards against the plucking of forbidden fruit by offering the tree of life, with its twelve manner of fruits; for, in his "Scripture History," and "Scripture Natural History," the mind, the taste, the curiosity, the eye, are all gratified, and in a manner which fortifies instead of suspending, far less undoing, the work of "keeping the heart with all diligence." Like him who said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil," this Mentor follows the young Telemachus in his travels, and, knowing well that life to us all is a battle to the end, he arms him on the right hand and on the left, not even allowing him to stray into "The Exhibition of All Nations," unaccompanied with something to remind him that "The Bible is the Great Exhibition of All Nations." The man who loves the little will never overlook the poor; and so we find in the same person "the Prince of Preachers to Children," and "the Cottager's Friend." Before his last illness he had projected a work of devotion for the young, of which the first part only has been published. But his two chief works have yet to be mentioned, namely, "Devotional and Practical References" on nearly every verse in the Bible, and his invaluable "Guide to Family Devotion." Of this latter volume, which was first published in 1833, it is computed that at least fifty thousand copies have been sold in England, and a scarcely less number in the United States of America. This, therefore, is the work which has spread his memor-

able fame to the widest circumference, and which will perpetuate his usefulness to the latest age.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

Infirmities of body had been creeping upon Dr. Fletcher for several years, but it was confidently anticipated by his friends that he would be spared to witness the fulfilment of his jubilee, and the completion of an intended commemoration of the event, which, at his own request, had assumed the shape of a school building. But the messenger of the Master came and called his spirit away on Sunday morning, the 30th of September. Just as the bells of Clapton parish church had ceased ringing for morning service, he peacefully breathed his last, in the seventy-third year of his age, to join in the more perfect worship of the heavenly host. The solemn fact was communicated to his affectionate and bereaved congregation, in a most appropriate manner, by the Rev. Dr. Halley, of New College, who that morning was preaching in Finsbury Chapel. So tranquil was the closing scene, that it seemed almost uncertain whether the spirit was really gone. His latest words were words of prayer. During the night preceding he had not spoken; but on Saturday evening he offered up a beautiful petition for the church, and for several persons individually. From that time he remained silent, and his end was perfect peace, proving in his own case the truth of the promise contained in the text of his first sermon—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." The posture of his mind throughout the illness which has brought him to the grave was such as yields sweet consolation to his mourning friends, and is adapted to confirm the faith of his bereaved flock. He did not speak much or often, nor make distinct reference to death; but, in more immediate prospect of it, it was evident that he stood prepared. Even under the influence of opiates, his wanderings of mind never departed from the things of God, and what he said at any time was mostly in the language of devotion. On the Wednesday before his decease, he spoke a great deal at intervals. At one time he said—"How infinitely superior are the waters of salvation to those which lead to destruction! I have been brought to the very verge of affliction; but, all through, I have derived unspeakable enjoyment from those beautiful words, 'There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.'" After an interval he observed—"We should all offer up earnest prayer that those who are concerned about their souls should become truly reconciled to God; and, especially, that those who are more concerned about this world should be convinced of their folly; and, oh! what folly it is to be so concerned about this world in which they are to be for so short a time." Again he said—"Let there be no gloomy Christianity. We should not always be thinking of the infinite justice of God, without remembering his equally infinite mercy. God is already reconciled, and *waits*, desiring that we should be reconciled to him." Under the impression that the next day would be the Sabbath, he offered up a prayer that many souls might be converted, and the services of the day be blessed to all; and then, with touching solemnity, pronounced the Benediction. The disorder which has deprived the church of Christ of one of its most venerable and useful ministers, and the rising generation of a spiritual teacher pre-eminently suited to impress and sway their young minds, was dropsy in the chest, supervening upon bronchitis. In February last he preached what will now be recalled as his farewell sermon. It was addressed to nearly three thousand children assembled to hear him in Surry Chapel. From that time his health gradually declined. With one or two exceptions, he was not afterwards seen taking any part in the services of Finsbury Chapel. He was attended by Dr. Risdon Bennett, who, on the setting in of dropsical symptoms, could hold out to anxious friends no hope of his recovery. The mourning family on this occasion is composed of the bereaved widow, their only child, and Mrs. Hardcastle, wife of the member for Bury St. Edmunds, the surviving daughter of the late Mrs. Alexander Fletcher, by Mr. Lambert, her first husband.

May not this brief history be most appropriately summed up in the words of two sacred poets ?

" Sure the last end
Of the good man is peace !—How calm his exit !
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft.
Behold him in the evening tide of life ;
By unperceived degrees he wears away ;
Yet, like a sun, seems larger at his setting."

" How blest the righteous when he dies !
When sinks a weary soul to rest,
How mildly beam the closing eyes,
How gently heaves the expiring breast !

" So fades a summer cloud away ;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er ;
So gently shuts the eye of day ;
So dies a wave along the shore.

" A holy quiet reigns around,
A calm which life nor death destroys ;
Nothing disturbs that peace profound,
Which his unfettered soul enjoys.

" Farewell, conflicting hopes and fears,
Where lights and shades alternate dwell !
How bright the unchanging morn appears !
Farewell, inconstant world, farewell !

" Life's labour done, as sinks the clay,
Light from its load the Spirit flies ;
While heaven and earth combine to say,
' How blest the righteous when he dies ! ' "

The mortal remains of the deceased, were interred in Abney Park Cemetery, on Monday, Oct. 8th, 1860, in the presence of nearly four thousand people, including a multitude of children. The service was conducted in the adjacent Congregational Chapel, by the Rev. Thomas Binney, minister of the Weigh House Chapel.

Funeral Service.

THE solemn service was commenced in Abney Park Chapel, by the singing of the following hymn:—

“Hear what the voice from heaven proclaims,
For all the pious dead;
Sweet is the savour of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.
“They die in Jesus and are blest;
How kind their slumbers are!
From suffering and from sin released,
And freed from ev’ry snare.
“Far from this world of toil and strife,
They’re present with the Lord;
The labours of their mortal life
End in a large reward.”

This hymn having been devoutly sung, the Rev. Thomas Binney said: Let us listen to the teaching of Scripture—the mind of God, in respect of human mortality, and the manner in which it is met by the gospel:

“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” “By one man came sin into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

The physical results of mortality.

“All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.” “Man dieth and wasteth away—yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?” “When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.” “Thou prevailest for ever against him and he passeth; thou changest his countenance and sendest him away.” “Surely every man walketh in a vain show;” “man, being in honour, abideth not;” “he is like the beast that perisheth;” “like sheep, they are led unto the grave; death shall feed on them;” “surely every man, at his best state, is altogether vanity.”

Man’s inquiry: God’s answer.

“If a man die, shall he live again?” “As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.” “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead.”

Evangelical announcements: a joyous message to the world.

“Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel.” “Oh, death! I will be thy plague; oh, grave! I will be thy destruction.” “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”

The words of Jesus to the church.

"I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

The experience, hope, and blessedness of the righteous. First, Old Testament saints.

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsels, and afterwards receive me to glory." "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "Thou wilt show me the path of life." "In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." "I will behold thy face in righteousness;" "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

New Testament believers.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he cometh we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;" "for we look for the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." "We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." "For me to live is Christ, to die, gain." "Now am I ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, desiring that I may be found in him; not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God through faith. That I may know him in the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable to his death." "He is our life." "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." "He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for us." "He hath washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us to be kings and priests unto God, even the Father." "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; and so it is written, the first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening

spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy : the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy ; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery ; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

THE ADDRESS.

Mr. Binney then proceeded to say : I fear that we have fallen into a great error. Our dear widowed sister, and her immediate connections, applied to me more in the capacity of a private friend than as a public man, to conduct this service. We ought to have recollected that it was impossible for one standing on so public an eminence as our departed brother did, to fall, and to be carried to his last resting-place without a large expression of public sympathy. And instead of the mere indulgence of private feeling, there ought to have been the recollection of the public mind ; and other ministers, I feel, now, should have been here conducting this service ; other men more suitable to conduct it ; others, of different denominations, taking part, and expressing and uttering forth, by that act, the feeling we have respecting the dead, our appreciation of that many-sidedness of his heart—his large affection, and his charitable feeling towards all sections of the church. But, dear friends, although this assembly, and the whole aspect of this service, is to me utterly changed from what was anticipated, yet we must do the best, under God, that we can. This cannot be considered a private, but must be looked upon as a great public gathering. Devout men and women, in large numbers, follow our brother, and make great lamentation over him—for that is the feeling, I am conscious, in many hearts. Suffer me, then, to make an addition to those words of Holy Writ which I have read to you, and which, for myself, I think it enough to listen to. I do not want the voice of man on an occasion like this ; for what can we say after utterances like those you have heard from the Divine Word ? Yet, dear friends, I do feel that, without encroaching upon the duty which my respected brother will have to discharge next Sunday morning, there might be an impropriety if some word was not uttered more largely than we anticipated, under the circumstances in which we now find ourselves.

The first thing, dear brethren, is to impress our minds with the solemnity of the fact that has brought us together. We are familiar with it—the vanishing and passing away, as it were, of an intelligence—all that was visible disappears ; we bury it out of our sight ; that becomes an offensive thing which was the seat of intelligence and the temple of religion. It is a familiar sight this, in our world—what is occurring to us every day. And yet, if it could be that some stranger from the world of light and life, who knew nothing of death, could look upon this scene, what a mystery it would seem to him ! It is for us to meditate on the meaning. We can be at no loss if we have listened to the Divine Word, as it has been read to us. We do not philosophise on the matter. We do not reason about it, on the principle that if we have life

under such circumstances, we must have death—that there must be corruption if there is generation; no, we are the pupils, the students, of THE BOOK. We sit at the feet of a great and Divine Teacher, and we take our philosophy from him. We believe death to be *unnatural*—to be a break upon original order, and that we are to look at it only as a symptom of something worse. It is only symptomatic of a far deeper disease—something far more serious—sin; the disease of our spiritual nature. And hence the Scripture teaches us that it is nothing merely to get over the fear of death. Simply by insensibility we may rise above that—if that is all. If what appears is all—if I could think that death was just the great end in itself—that we had just to go to sleep, I should see nothing so terrible in it. But the great thing is, its connection with something deeper, profounder—sin! Hence it is—let us understand, brethren, that what we want is something that will go to the very seat and core of the disorder. We want something not to affect the symptom, but to go, I say, right down to the core of the disease. And that we have in the gospel. For the gospel comes not merely to announce immortality, to give us the assurance of a future life, that might make things worse, that might give terrible certainty to the fearful anticipations of the conscience. I want more than life and immortality brought to light, by him who is our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; and, in fact, the gospel not only comes to reveal to me the truth, as to the certainty of a future life, but it comes into the world to do for me a work, by which the future life can be rendered blessed. We want pardon of sin; we want the disease of the soul healed, and then the symptoms will pass away of themselves. We want to be raised from a death of sin into a life of righteousness and of God. The gospel comes and meets our condition. And along with this objective truth, subjective experience throws the mind forward to the anticipation of the perfection and perpetuity of our whole nature. And the gospel doctrine of the resurrection from the dead is not merely human immortality; it is the immortality of humanity—of our whole nature—"For we look for the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

This is the gospel; and this it is that meets our case as sinners, as immortals. And then the blessedness of accepting this—of receiving Christ—of understanding and experiencing the power of his resurrection—pardon and reconciliation by the cross—Divine life by the Divine Spirit; and then an active life of holiness, labour, toil, joy, under the sunlight of God's love; a life full of happy labour, joyous toil for the God, the Redeemer, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; a life of strength to bear sorrow, discipline, suffering—anything, by the grace of that new and better life which is pulsating within us, and the happy anticipation—rest in the heart here, and a better rest up yonder. Life through Christ now; life perfected, glorified, by-and-bye; and the hope of that sustaining and comforting. Brethren, it is right for us on these occasions to look at these great truths. We come not to glorify the dead; not merely to speak of man. We come not to meditate at the open sepulchre, and to gather from it those lessons respecting our condition, our end, our immutability, our sin, our hope, our blessedness, which are suggested to the thoughtful mind by the event before us.

Yet, dear brethren, we cannot proceed to fulfil the last duties that we owe to the consecrated dust of a laborious and eminent man of God without referring a little to him—not to glorify him, but to magnify that grace which made him what he was.

You all know, probably, that he had the great blessedness of being born of a pious parentage. And it is a great thing to be the children of the good—a great thing to be the offspring of God-fearing parents—to be trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We have reason to believe that Divine principles were early implanted, and Divine life early manifested, in him. He was called of God early, as

we believe, by His grace ; and then he was further called to the ministry of the Word. You know his history—as a very young man coming to this great metropolis, and almost instantly occupying a large space in the public eye ; preaching at a place of worship which some of us can remember, and respecting the history of which I know an incident which nobody else knows. I had two respectable, worthy women, members of my congregation, both of whom are now dead. They were at one time living next to this old place of worship in Miles's Lane. They were not religious ; respectable, but worldly ; would not have gone into a Presbyterian or Nonconformist place of worship for the world. But they wished to hear the singing in the chapel, and by opening the windows they could hear it, and also something that was said. And listening to what they heard, the utterances came upon them, accompanied by the power of God, and impressed their minds, leading them to feel and to inquire, and they ultimately became devoted servants of God, spiritual, converted women, and united themselves with the church, but subsequently came under my care. This interesting fact occurred to my mind when I thought of the place which our friend first occupied when he came to London, though that happened previous to his coming.

Every one knows how for so many years our friend held on his course ; and though his name was in some degree darkened and disfigured for a little time by the shadow of a cloud passing over it, how the sun broke out, and he went on from strength to strength, and in maturity of character and virtue, and amidst surrounding and general respect, he finished his course, having kept the faith, and, by God's grace, felt that he was ready to be offered. And we are here to-day, all of us, to testify to the respect we entertain for his character, and the feeling with which we cherish his memory.

He was called of God to do a great work, especially in relation to the young. Marvellous power, wonderful aptitude, a talent rising into genius, he had for addressing himself to the young mind, and multitudes—numbers, I suppose, that we can hardly venture to mention—of young souls have received impressions of the truth from his lips, and have had the seed sown by his hand in their hearts ; and, by God's blessing, the seed has taken root and sprung up, and is now developing itself in many a Christian character. A genial, loving, amiable man, our brother was, catholic-spirited, ready for service at any time, and always manifesting his brotherly feelings, and his readiness to engage in any good work. As a neighbour in the city, I can speak of him so. We almost always reckoned upon him at the Annual Meeting of our Juvenile Missionary Society. He was an institution with us for that occasion. We should have hardly felt the meeting to be complete without the venerable form and the loving voice of our friend, Dr. Fletcher. The young people, especially, were always glad and happy to see him, and to hear his racy remarks. A loving, brotherly, neighbourly, Christian man was the friend whom we inter this day.

It will be for my friend, Dr. Macfarlane, on Sunday morning to appeal to you, most of whom, I suppose, are of his church and congregation, in relation to the use you have made of the instructions which you have heard from his lips ; whether you have deeply pondered the fact of the many prayers and supplications which he offered for your souls : for he was a devout man. I believe that he poured out his soul in prayer for his people much, and that the service which he rendered in the Christian community, by his books of devotion, is but the representation of a devout spirit which was often before the throne of God, making intercessions and supplications for you. And as he lived he died.

" Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air ;
His watchword at the gates of death ;
He enters Heaven with prayer."

Our brother did. Almost his last words were prayer ; and prayer, not so much of himself, as intercession for you, the members of his flock and charge. There is ; solemn thought in this. Those lips can pray no more. We do not pray to the dead

we do not pray *for* the dead ; we do not believe that the dead can pray for us. The prayers of the servant of God are ended, and the last petition from his lips that could go to the throne for you has ascended. Let these things come upon your hearts. I believe there are some of his church and charge that will feel thoughts like these. And the little ones, the children and young persons, I doubt not that they will remember and lay to heart many of those beautiful instructions and vivid illustrations of divine truth which have been addressed to them.

Now, dear brethren, let us prepare to go to the last duty that we owe to the dead. But who are the dead ? Not here [pointing to the coffin], as we think. Our brother is more alive now than ever he was ; more full of life, understands better what it is to live, than we think, having entered into the world of life, and blessedness, and joy.

The dead is not before you. The dead may be round about. The dead may be here, there, yonder ! Dear brethren, there is a more fearful thing than lying in the coffin. Sacred dust that will be taken into the keeping of the Master, while it is true—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord." There is nothing fearful in this. But there is something fearful in being dead to God, dead in sin, without spiritual life, without God, without Christ !

Now, let us lay this to heart. The solemnity and the service was intended to lead us to serious consideration, and personal examination of ourselves. May God grant us his grace, direct us in our thoughts and feelings, and help us now to go and commit to the grave the remains of our dear brother in Christ, rejoicing in the gospel, which hath brought life and immortality to light—rejoicing in the glorious resurrection of the dead hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen and Amen.

Our dear brother was so intimately associated with children, that it seems appropriate that in this service the voices of the children should be heard, as associated with his memory. The children will now sing one or two verses of the 38th hymn, in the Child's own Hymn Book :—

" Around the throne of God in Heaven,
Thousands of children stand," &c.

Prayer having been offered, the procession was again formed, and the body was deposited in the tomb. Another brief prayer followed ; and, as the large assembly was dispersing, the children sang several other hymns. The service concluded at two o'clock

THE FUNERAL SERMON.

According to arrangement the Rev. John Macfarlane, D.D., of Glasgow, preached the Funeral Sermon, on Sunday morning, the 14th of October, in the large chapel, adjoining Finsbury Circus, with which Dr. Fletcher's name had been so completely identified for a long succession of years. The writer of these pages was among the thousands who assembled on that solemn occasion, and, unlike very many of them, gained admittance to the edifice, which was crowded in every part, a good while before the service began. The pulpit and parts of the galleries were draped in black cloth, and crape ; and the great proportion of the congregation wore mourning attire. Dr. Macfarlane's discourse occupied an hour and a half in its delivery, though uttered with unusual rapidity. It was based upon the words—"He was a burning and a shining light" (John v. 35) ; and has since been published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co. in a neat shilling book. Any profits that may arise from the sale are to be given to the "Fletcher Jubilee Memorial" Fund. This "Memorial," it may be remarked, in passing, is intended to consist of a School Building, which is the form Dr. Fletcher had desired his Jubilee celebration to assume. Dr. Macfarlane's sermon consisted of three points—a striking exposition of the text in its application to John the Baptist—a Biographical Sketch of Dr. Fletcher—and a setting forth of the manner and propriety of the application of the words of the text to the dear departed. Alluding to his more prominent private excellences, the preacher said—

In the closet he was a devout man. His publications prove this—they rank among the best of their class. His devotion was exercised upon the word of God—the book above all others which he studied: from a child he had known the Scriptures; but as he grew in years he became more and more enraptured with them, and more and more felt their purifying and enlightening influence. His devotion was nourished by communion with God in prayer. He was eminently a man of prayer, which explains the secret of his marvellous success, as a Christian preacher. It was oftentimes sublime to hear him praying in the great congregation, but the fire had been previously kindled, and the lights had been previously fed from the “secret place of thunder.” In prayer he lived, and in prayer he died. His last service on a death-bed was to commend in prayer his family, his flock, and his friends to God. His devotion was expended upon the cause of God in this world. It was continually flying like a dove between the ark of his piety and a world lying in sorrow and in sin. No man could complain of his religion as monkery, or of himself as an anchorite. All men might see his light shining, and all might taste that his salt had not lost its savour.

In his library he was a diligent student. Upon its shelves there were not many profoundly philosophic, nor highly classical books; but there was an abundant stock of folios and quartos by the early fathers, and of the rare and savoury productions of the English and Scotch divines. These he read and pondered. He was strengthened intellectually with their strength, and became a strong and flourishing bishop of souls upon their green pastures. He also kept pace with literature, and was never found behind in those discoveries and researches which have made the century conspicuous. Of any learning of this kind which he acquired he made no ostentation; so that, unless something occurred to elicit it, it could not be discovered. As in almost every other department of his work, he was in this, alike quietly and humbly, content to procure knowledge for its own sake, and to make what consecrated use of it he could in the service of God. His habits of study were systematic and orderly. He could not otherwise have written and published so many elaborate volumes.

In his family he was everything that was gentle and lovely. Of warm attachments, of sweet and kindly temper, of conscientious attention to all the household duties, which as a husband, a father, and a master he had to discharge, there was always about him an air of calm contentment, and a sweet and winning grace about all his steps. His loss elsewhere may be made up, but in his own domestic circle, never.

In society he was the careful and cautious example of the life which he counselled others to lead before men. In manner, he was bland and courteous; in spirit, most charitable and catholic; and to his friendships, generous and true. Hence he was inoffensive as a companion, esteemed and useful as a citizen, and very dearly loved by all with whom he was confidential and intimate. His deeds of benevolence and charity were fully up to his means. He knew nothing of a sordid spirit, and oftener sacrificed than saved his substance, that he might “honour the Lord.”

But it is to what he was *in the pulpit and in the church*, said the preacher, that I wish to draw special notice; simply, because in these he was best known, and to his conduct in these he is indebted for his celebrity. A popularity that was maintained in such a city as this for nearly half a century, must have had some extraordinary aliment and element. Instead, however, of analysing the style of his discourses, or criticising their literary beauties, or describing their peculiar oratory, I would rather dwell for a little upon one or two of those grand evangelical characteristics which gave to all his ministrations a sacred prominence, and a telling power for good, and in which, after all, really lay the secret of his strength and success.

I. *His ministry indicated strong faith in a personal Saviour.* Every one was made to feel that the preacher believed in the existence and love of a personal Redeemer. From his earliest days, Dr. Fletcher had tasted and found His salvation to be sweet; and ever as he grew did the impression deepen that he was the servant of a real, living, loving Lord. When public men live remote from the seat of power, and are

seldom personally under the eye of their superiors, they are less likely to be so lively and conscientiously on their guard as are those who stand at the foot of the throne, and in the immediate presence of the sovereign. The intense earnestness of Dr. Fletcher when preaching, the deep seriousness of his religious convictions, the evident and entire surrender of his soul to his work, his energetic wrestlings with the human conscience, and his sometimes rapturous conceptions of the glory of Christ's person, cannot be accounted for otherwise. He lived near, very near, to the person of the Emmanuel. His eloquence saw God and lived. He studied with the light above him of a Saviour's smile, wrote to the dictation of His lip, and spake under the fire of His eye. It was this very belief of an ever-present and ever-watchful Master that fired his zeal, and maintained it unflagging to the last. Now all this was seen, heard and felt under his ministry. Every one was made to know that the preacher was obedient to higher powers than those which usually move common-place, perhaps nominal instructors. Many preachers make it appear as if they serve rather a rule than a ruler, rather a system or craft than a personal will, rather an idea than a mind, rather a creed than a Saviour. Hence the tenacity with which some cling to High or Low Church views, with which others work under the impulses of sect or in submission to some Episcopal or Presbyterian party, or to some low passion, for mere personal power, pelf, or repute. Dr. Fletcher's influence came forth directly from a commanding regard for the pleasure of that One whom he put first and foremost in thought, word, and labour. While this gave special efficacy to his ministry, it also ever made it a labour of love. He was not oppressed with it, he felt it not to be a yoke; at all events, this constant realisation of a living and watchful Master made that yoke an easy one, and that burden light. In this we have the secret of the self-denials and martyrdoms to which, in times of persecution, religious men have been subjected; in this we have the key to all the earnest preaching of the times; and in this the grand secret is revealed as to how and by whom the languishing piety of the churches is surely and lastingly to be revived.

But to this feature in Dr. Fletcher's ministry we can trace other good things besides his preaching. It accounts, for instance, for his benevolent regard for all charitable and religious institutions that considered the poor, the diseased, the ignorant, the oppressed, or the depraved. Newgate, as well as Finsbury, is his monument. He especially yearned over the souls of those who were to die on the scaffold—with what success *the day will declare*. But that institution which above all others captivated his heart and multiplied his labours, was the *Missionary Society*, of which he was an honoured Director.

II. *His ministry indicated a passionate love for the souls of men.* This could not fail to accompany his lofty and realizing views of a personal Redeemer. Love to the Saviour, and love to souls, form but one and the same tide-swell, upon whose flowing billows the pastoral heart is sublimely carried. Dr. Fletcher was early fascinated with the love of Christ for sinners of mankind. In like spirit he himself wept over them and sighed for their recovery. When a man's own soul is converted he is, from that moment, alive to its priceless worth, and becomes seriously anxious after the salvation of the souls of others. We cannot trust in the longevity of that zeal which has its rise elsewhere. Dr. Fletcher's ministry was therefore conspicuous for such zeal. His estimate of the value of the human soul was taken from no low stand-point. He looked down into its claimant wants from the cross of Christ. From no other position can its utter depravity, wretchedness, and ruin be observed. They who construct their little platforms far down upon the level ground of a mere philanthropy, and upon these look through the telescopes of human devices, never see the grand and grave necessities of souls in their solemn relations to spiritual and eternal things: hence, all their precognitions and prescriptions have neither smoothed the furrows of the brow nor brushed away one tear from the cheek of distressed humanity. The creation

groans as before—the wail of its woe is loud, ahrill; and piercing as before—man still goes to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets; but no voice of comfort rises from the doleful pit of an infidel Rationalism, not even from the plausible recipes of a homœopathic Christianity. To see the appalling spectacle of a soul dead in sin, you must therefore ascend the cross, and as you gaze upon the bleeding Lamb of God, you will conclude that an infinite atonement, such as He made, implies an infinitude of guilt and woe, which could be met by no lesser sacrifice. This is estimating the worth of the soul by the tremendous price of its ransom. Dr. Fletcher's studies of "the great mystery of godliness" were prosecuted amid the supernatural phenomena and darkness of the ninth hour. In no other way can we account for his fifty years of unbroken and undiminished ardour in preaching the Gospel. The whole "place called Calvary" was to him one spacious library, the books of which were ranged all around in the rent rocks, the opened graves, the frowning skies, the rending earthquakes, and the solemn voices that came down from the dying Victim there; these to him were no Sibylline books, containing only the fates of Rome and the Cæsars, but the great archives of Christianity, big with the destinies of the Church of God: His teacher in this theology, was the dying Saviour Himself. From every groan of His tortured heart, and from every wave of sorrow that lashed His mighty spirit, were compiled those thrilling and pathetic passages in his sermons, which filled the eyes with tears and the hearts of his hearers with holy sympathies.

III. *His ministry indicated an unquenchable love for the souls of children.* This might have been included under the former particular, but it formed such a brilliant gem in the pastoral life of Dr. Fletcher as to merit specific and emphatic notice. His renown is almost world-wide as a preacher to the lambs of the flock; consequently, we only obey the voice of a universal suffrage when we place this crown upon his hoary head, and summon a bereaved childhood to shed its tributary tear over his honored grave.

Preaching to children has only recently risen to the important position of a Christian institute—even reverend and learned minds now mark it as an high place to which ambition may be directed—laurels won here are striven for as prizes—and it is well for the Church and the world that it is so. Greatness can be reached by other and more ostentatious paths, but no greatness whatever is so sure to command the approbation of God, and the lasting applause of the truly good as this, which flows from a just estimate of the claims of the young. A great and eventful crisis for the Church of Christ seems to be upon us, and it must be upon the rising generation that its duties and responsibilities shall fall. To Dr. Fletcher's credit it must be noticed, that when he first began this interesting work, he stood nearly alone. There had been before him no such distinct selection of pastoral labour. He had few to cheer him by example, or support him by co-operation. Without claiming for him the merit of originality, he must be allowed the honour of having seized the position and made the duty popular. He seems to have caught the passion as if from inspiration, and is therefore entitled to be considered as the Baptist forerunner of what is now not an experiment in the wilderness, but a great power in the Church. He could say, with Wilberforce, "I delight in little children. I could spend hours in watching them. How much there is in them that the Saviour loved!" Such, indeed, was his delight in it, that he considered it as a recreation. When otherwise oppressed, he would go to this fountain and be refreshed and refilled. So congenial, indeed, to his nature was this work, that he often felt and spoke as if for this "one thing" he had been put into the ministry.

As a preacher to the young he was singularly unaffected. His love to the child was quite genuine, and the child was at once convinced of it. Children are said to be quick discerners of sincerity, and, as if by intuition, take at once to the true, and avoid the false. Dr. Fletcher never had to put on the appearance of such love. It was as a well of living water in his heart, and had only to be opened by occasions to flow gently over. Then it was constantly flowing—it did not gush to-day and freeze to-

morrow—it was a *life* within which unceasingly breathed blessings upon their heads. It was the glittering pearl of his young days, and became the constellation that shone upon his evening toil. To see hundreds of happy and intelligent young faces looking up to him as their teacher in the truths of God, to enkindle in their little hearts warm love for Jesus, and deep interest in their own salvation, and to be the means of bringing one such suckling into the bosom of our Father God, was more than enough to set on fire the fuel that lay upon the altar of his compassionate heart. No doubt he had his eye upon the sublime *dénouement* of the whole, upon the rescue of their souls from the fangs and dens of vice here, and their *reception* at length into heaven; but what of this? Is not this the very object for which Jesus Himself died, and for which He causes them to die, that they may be for ever with Him? In one word, His interest in little children was *often triumphant*—it was blessed for their conversion. It was sometimes a great success. Hundreds still live who praise him for his efforts to induce them to fear God. His spiritual children appear every now and then from all quarters of the globe, to pronounce blessings upon his head. And this was his grand consolation, that though he might have to wait long here in order to see the fruit of his labours, he was certain to see it in abundance in the vineyard of heaven. It has been beautifully said to bereaved parents—and we may apply it to Dr. Fletcher—“In sending so many children to the place of happiness before you, you are, as it were, glorified by piecemeal; instead of planting families from yourself on earth, you have contributed towards the planting of colonies in heaven; and instead of recruiting the forces of the church militant, have furnished the trophies of the church triumphant.” I cannot conceive of anything grander, even in heaven, than the “All hail!” that bursts from the lips of the ransomed, as they welcome the approach of one who turned them from the error of their ways. I only think that a deeper intonation may be given, and higher and more rapturous notes may rise, from the children’s choir as they escort to the King, the priest that led them to God. Surely, now, he is more than recompensed for all his toils and fears in this land of shade! Now he knows into what a goodly sphere of work he came when Jesus commanded him to bring the little children to Him. And now, let him rest for ever from his “loved employ” with the Lord he loved and the children who were given to him. If this be not a triumph, where shall we seek for one? If this be not a reward, where and how has true merit ever met one? And if this be not grace unfolded into glory, where has fig-tree ever blossomed, where has the vine been ever fruitful, where has the labour of the olive ever succeeded? But, this is a triumph—this, the fruit of a faithful ministry, is indeed a cluster of grapes, better than the vintage of Ephraim. And this, the gathering in of the sheaves into the barn, is a harvest-home, whose hymn hushes into silence even the songs of angelic reapers, and which shall be reverberating among the arches of the skies when the present heavens and earth shall for ever have fled away.

Addressing the Church, Dr. Macfarlane said:—I beseech you, brethren, let not your Pastor’s light be extinguished by your inconsistencies; let not his voice be silenced by your ungodliness; but let its sweetest tones be long heard in your concord and holiness. While any of you remain here, let not the seal of silence be pressed on the spiritual lip of such a ministry. And thus, as one by one you fall asleep, its eloquent music shall be heard, languishing, it may be, in the ear of man, but together caught up with you into the air, to become immortal in the hosannahs of eternity. Let there be no looking back—no lingering by the way. Press forward in the course—grow in grace—shine like the light; and, while “Excelsior!” is your motto, let nothing below the heights of heaven be your grand and glorious ultimate of faith and practice.

“Onward! is the march of mind,
Onward! is the path of man:
All for progress is combined;
Progress is the Almighty plan.
Onward! onward, rolling ever;
Onward! rivulet and river.

“Nought in heaven’s arched hemisphere,
Nought in earth’s long history,
Nought in all the things that were,
Nought in all that is to be,
Shows a backward way or will;
All is onward, onward still,

“Upward all the loveliest things,
Upward all the holiest tend.
When the the skylark loudest sings,
When the sweetest odours blend,
Upward unseen angels bear
Piety, and praise, and prayer.

“All is onward, upward flight,
Soaring more and more above,
Through long vistas tracked in light,
Opening into realms of love.
Light and life still brightening on
To their own effulgent throne.”

Sketches and Essays.

MOTHERS CAN DO GREAT THINGS.

THE first presentation of a child to God is to be accompanied with fervent intercession ; but a pious mother will not confine prayer in its behalf to that solemn occasion ; she will make this her constant employment. She is, of course, one who “ gives herself to prayer ; ” and the love which she bears to her child, sanctified by Divine grace, will prompt her, “ without ceasing, to make mention of it in her prayers night and day.” While her child is a mere infant, she can employ no other means for its spiritual good ; and the very thought that this is all that she can do, will make her the more frequent and fervent in her supplications. But her prayers for her children will be prolonged beyond the period of infancy ; she will continue to pray for them as they grow up, and not cease till death remove her from them, or take them away from her. She will rejoice to “ strive together with ” her godly husband “ in prayers to God for them ; ” or, if her husband is a stranger to godliness, or if she is a widow, she will be yet more earnestly desirous after their spiritual welfare, in her daily supplications. She will pray, not only *for*, but *with* her children : she will “ let them see her speaking to her God,” and hear how anxiously and ardently she “ seeks their good ” at the throne of grace.

Now, by thus praying for her children, a pious mother may effect great things in their behalf. The thought, that she is daily wrestling with God for the salvation of their souls, may excite them to earnestness in seeking salvation themselves ; and salutary impressions, deep and lasting, are still more likely to be produced, when, by praying with them, she makes them witnesses of her intense solicitude. Remarkable instances of this might be related ; but at present the early history of the late John Angell James may be mentioned as an illustration. It was the practice of his pious mother

The Mother's Magazine. December, 1860.

to take her children, one by one, into her closet with her, and there supplicate God's blessing upon their progress in after life. Deep impressions were made on the mind of her son; and though the new associations to which he was introduced, when he left his father's house to become an apprentice to a draper, had the effect of deadening these impressions, so that for a time he neglected the reading of his Bible, disregarded the Sabbath, and never called upon God, yet ere long they were revived, and he was arrested in his downward course, by seeing a new apprentice, who had come to the draper's shop, kneeling down at night by his bedside to pray.

While a mother's prayers may thus benefit her children, by their own direct influence upon them, they derive a still higher importance, from the consideration of the efficacy of prayer in obtaining blessings from God. "The effectual fervent" or "inwrought prayer" of a righteous woman, as well as of "a righteous man, availeth much;" and as there is no love more tender and ardent than that which a Christian mother cherishes towards her children, so there can be no prayers more fervent and more availing than those which, under the influence of "the Spirit of grace and supplications," she presents in their behalf. There is sometimes evidence, immediately or very soon afforded, of the success of a godly mother's prayers. When she has directed her supplications unto the Lord, and, looking up, has expected an answer, the answer has been given, and her heart has "rejoiced, with exceeding great joy," over a son or a daughter "added to the Lord," and so knit to herself by a new and holy tie, which neither time nor space nor death itself can sever. Many instances might be given; but let one suffice. "I was lately informed," says a missionary, "by a pious and amiable minister in Somersetshire, that on the evening when the first permanent impressions were made on his mind, his pious mother was detained at home. But she spent the time devoted to public worship in secret prayer for the salvation of her son; and so fervent did she become in her intercessions, that, like our Lord in Gethsemane, she fell on her face, and remained in fervent supplication till the service had nearly closed. Her son, brought under the deepest impressions by the sermon of his father, went into a field, after the service, and there prayed most fervently for himself. When he came home, the mother looked at her son with manifest concern, anxious to discover whether her prayers had been heard,

and whether her son had commenced the all-important inquiry, 'What must I do to be saved?' In a few days, the son acknowledged himself to be the subject of impressions of which none need be ashamed,—impressions which lay the foundation of all excellence of character here, and of all blessedness hereafter."

Not always, however, may mothers see their prayers speedily answered: they may have to wait long for the answer to them; but this should not discourage them, for delays are not denials. Often, after many years of patient expectation, have the hearts of praying mothers been made glad by the evidence afforded, that "verily God hath heard them;" and often, too, have their requests been granted, after they had gone down to the grave, saying, perhaps, with tears of grief and sorrow, "Our hope is lost." Augustine, one of the best and greatest of the Christian Fathers, was idle and vicious in his youth. His mother, Monica, an eminently pious woman, was exceedingly grieved by his folly and wickedness. But she "continued instant in prayer" for his conversion; and "perhaps," as has been said, "no mother, since the days of the mother of the Redeemer, had in the end greater comfort in a son." "For nine years," says he, "while I was rolling in the filth of sin, often attempting to rise, and still sinking deeper, did she, with vigorous hope, persist in incessant prayer;" and in the last conversation between mother and son, we find her saying, "Once there was a reason why I might wish to live long, even that I might see you a Christian before I died; but God has granted me my desire, in your devotedness to His service and abandonment of the world."

Another instance may be mentioned of the success of a mother's intercessions. "As to my labours," says a minister of the Gospel, "I may seem to do much,—to myself it appears scarcely anything. Ah! you know but little of my obligations to almighty grace and redeeming love. I look back with dismay and horror to the time when I led the van in wickedness. My heart bleeds at the thought of the nights when, mad with intoxication, I have returned to my tender mother, burst open the window, poured out a torrent of abuse, and sunk upon the bed a monster of iniquity. Next morning, I have been aroused by a mournful voice: I have listened, and found it was my mother pouring out her soul in this language—'O Lord, oh, have mercy, mercy, mercy upon my poor child! Lord, I will not, cannot give him up. Lord, he is still my child.

Surely he is not yet out of the reach of mercy. O Lord, hear, hear, I beseech Thee, a mother's prayers! Spare, oh spare, for Christ's sake, the son of her old age!' Yes, precious mother, thy prayers are now answered; and thy child, thy worthless, guilty child, still lives, a monument of boundless grace and incomprehensible mercy."

"My dear mother," wrote Mr. Newton, many years after his conversion, "besides the pains she took with me, often commended me with many prayers and tears to God; and I doubt not but I reap the fruit of these prayers to this hour."—"I wondered," said the late Richard Knill, whose mother often took him, when a boy, into her chamber and prayed with him, "I wondered why she wept so, and where she got such remarkable prayers for my father and the family; but I understand it now, and I have reason to believe that her prayers for them have been answered, and that she has met them all in heaven, except myself, and I trust, through real distinguishing grace, she shall meet me there also. Blessed be God for a praying mother!"—*From "Persis and Eunice; or, Christian Women's Work of Service," by Rev. A. Duncan.*

MAN'S WAYS AND GOD'S WAYS.

By whom will righteousness be attained? What mortal shall be invested with this royal mantle? What sinner shall thus present himself at the entrance of the heavenly sanctuary, with the certainty of finding a welcome reception and a free admittance?

To these questions all the religions of the world return this unanimous answer—"The virtuous man who has deserved it by his meritorious life. The sinner who, having repented of his errors, and reformed his conduct, puts a restraint upon his passions, and tries to do better for the future."

But the religion that comes from God, that alone answers—"The man to whom God does not impute sin. The sinner whose transgression God forgives through His grace. He who, having done no one righteous action to recommend himself to the favour of God, receives by faith the gift of the remission of his sins, which are all forgiven in the Saviour's love."

What a difference, or, rather, what a contradiction between these two answers! The first aims at the exaltation of man to heaven, and raises the sinner to the dignity of the Most High. The second assigns to man his proper place, viz., it supposes him lying in a state of darkness and death, until God descends to visit him, and erects the throne of His grace in the heart of the criminal whom His law had pronounced accursed.

Thus, an unhappy sinner, laden with guilt, and sighing after rest, knocks for relief at every gate of this world, and receives this universal answer: "Bring with you virtues and merits of your own, and we will give you a symbol of peace." Then passing near the narrow, solitary, and neglected gate of heaven, the threshold of which Jesus alone has traversed, he directs towards it a desponding look; he utters a sigh; and at length he hears these words sounding from the dwelling-place of the Most High—"Oh, thou, who art weary and heavy laden, look unto Him who justifieth the ungodly: believe in the name of Jesus Christ—so shall thy sins be forgiven, and thy soul shall find everlasting peace. Open thine eyes and behold. Here is the living water of grace, which springeth up unto life eternal. Draw near and drink abundantly, yea, drink freely of these streams of forgiveness and joy. Thou hast believed: go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee."

And the sinner who has believed, who has mixed faith with the words that he has heard, and received them into his heart, returns to his house justified. He no longer experiences disquietude and alarm; he now thinks upon God with love and gratitude, with the transporting hope of beholding Him, and of enjoying for ever in His bosom the unspeakable blessedness which Jesus has promised.

Then (and not before) this child of man, thus at peace with his Creator, and assured of His unchanging love, will listen with delight to the commands proceeding from the same mouth which has pronounced his sentence of grace and forgiveness, and will humbly submit to the yoke of holiness imposed by the hand of a father, while the spirit of adoption will continually unite his heart more closely to that of his beloved Redeemer.

Faith, therefore, receives through grace the righteousness of God, and the holiness, which this grace includes, reigns through love in the heart of the believer set at liberty."—From "*Gospel Seeds*," by the Rev. Cesar Malan, D.D.

THE HOLY CHILD.

"A CHILD is born." Such an event is, certainly, no novelty. On an average, some 3,000 or 4,000 children are born on our earth every hour. Yet the birth of one child was, and still is the world's wonder, yea, the wonder of heaven and of eternity. It was "a new thing in the earth," "a sign from the Lord," forming a fresh era in the cycles of glory.

A deep interest attaches to each child of the human family, and important events may grow out of its birth, but whether destined to be great or obscure, honoured or disesteemed, one solemn thing is true of each, it is born for eternity. Of the child concerning whom we now speak, it may be said with wondering exaltation, "He is born to be the author of eternal life to millions." Every child that lives is sure to exert more or less influence: but *this* child shall powerfully and blessedly affect the destiny of "a multitude that no man can number." Looking at a new-born child, we may say three things are sure concerning it, whatever else may or may not happen. If it lives only for a few years, it will suffer, sin, and die. It has brought an evil nature with it, even a bag of moral poison, and a venomous tooth. Its heart may be tried with grief, wrung with anguish—it may inflict many sad wounds on others, then die and be forgotten. Alas! poor, miserable existence. "Lord, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? Where is the remedy for earth's sorrowful sons?"

We turn again to "the Child born," and learn, from infallible authority, that he will *suffer* and *die*, but not *sin*; he will be wounded, but will wound none in return. Yea, his very wounds will be the means of healing millions. He has no poison in his nature. Strange, unheard-of fact, that he should be born to suffer and die, and yet born not to sin! But so it was: "the Child born" was "the Son given," even "God's holy child Jesus." This is "the Man from the Lord," whom, perhaps, our first mother thought she possessed, when she clasped her first-born to her heart, and called him "Cain," *possession*. It may be she thought the second Adam had arrived. Never was a greater mistake. Ages must first roll away, that man may first learn what sin is, and that he can do nothing to save himself from it. Then came "THE HOLY ONE"

“in the likeness of sinful flesh.” Let us draw near and see this great sight.

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise.” Thus, with inimitable simplicity, the Holy Scriptures introduce this sublime subject, and then give a detailed account of the wonderful event so long expected, so clearly foretold. It occurred at the time, in the place, and after the manner that was long before predicted. Providence prepared the way—angels announced the event, and sang a rapturous anthem to celebrate it. But we must not tarry round Nazareth and Bethlehem, with their teeming wonders of angel visits, divine operations, triumphant faith, holy joys, and lofty songs. We must not linger with the shepherds of Bethlehem, and the wise men from the east, but hasten to Jerusalem to greet the newly arrived king at his royal city.

His humble parents, full of wonder and gratitude, “brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.” Unknown he enters—unnoticed for a time he remains. The grateful offering of his mother is presented, betokening at once her poverty and her piety. She bends at Jehovah’s shrine in lowly adoration, and God looks down with infinite delight. Fit emblems were these innocent doves of the meek and gentle One whom Mary held in her arms. He was the living One, in whom the loving Spirit should evermore dwell, and from whom he would go forth to attract others to him, and make them like him.

But, behold, an aged man presses through the crowd of worshippers or loiterers, and, guided by an unerring hand, approaches the spot where Mary stands with her wondrous offspring. His countenance beams with happiness, for his soul is “filled with the Holy Spirit.” There is triumph in that tranquil eye, for he now sees “the consolation of Israel,” for whom he had so long waited. He takes the holy child in his arms, blesses God, and pours out a glad song of praise, which millions of tongues, in various ages and countries have prolonged until now: “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou has prepared before the face of all people. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.”

His prophetic eye saw millions of Gentiles rejoicing, ages after age, in His saving light; and he saw, too, the time when Isaiah’s

prophecy should be fulfilled to Israel as a nation. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

But how few of those who thronged that temple had any understanding of or sympathy with all this. They were too busy with show and ceremony to listen to prophecy; too well satisfied with their own righteousness to welcome such a Saviour. And even now do not various causes operate to draw away attention from that majestic organ of prophecy which fills the temple of truth with its melody, proclaiming that He who came once in lowliness to suffer, will soon come in glory to reign. O, Christian, be not so busy even about religion, as not to find time reverently and prayerfully to study prophecy.

Joseph and Mary listened with silent rapture to this glorious prophetic song; but while alternately gazing on the placid countenance of the holy child, and the animated face of the venerable Simeon, they saw a tinge of sadness overshadow the features of the rejoicing man. An intervening vision, something between the present bright hour and the glory he predicted, had passed before his mental eye. A scene of unequalled sorrow, and an act of unparalleled wickedness, met his view. His eye, hitherto uplifted to heaven, or fixed on the child whom he embraced, now sadly rested on the wondering mother. But first to prepare their hearts for the sad burden, he uttered, in the Lord's name, words of blessing, and then said, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Who that reads the history of Jesus—considers the treatment which he received from Israel—views the scene and company under the cross (John xix. 25-27)—or studies the result of the Lord's mission as regards that generation, but must acknowledge that those solemn words have been literally fulfilled? Nor are they yet exhausted. Israel at present fallen must rise again, and then better, truer "*thoughts*" shall be entertained respecting Jesus. Thoughts in sympathy with God's thoughts, and these shall find utterance in fervent prayers, when they "look unto him whom they have pierced;" and in grateful praises, when they have passed through "the fountain open to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." Then shall "the nation born in a day" sing "Unto

us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David; and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

Jerusalem has not yet answered to her name, "vision of peace." Very brief and imperfect, at best, has her peace been. How emphatically true were the words of her great prophet at the time of which we are speaking! "How is the faithful city become an harlot? It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers." Jesus always perfectly answered to his name. He fulfilled every prophecy, responded to every claim, satisfied every right desire, and redressed every woe brought to him by the sorrowful; yet Jerusalem said, "Let us kill him," "Away with him." Thus was Simeon's prophecy fulfilled, and Isaiah's words made good. Yet man's wickedness and Satan's malice were overruled to the fulfilment of God's grandest and most gracious purpose, even the provision of an infinite atonement; the "making of a great High Priest perfect through suffering," in order that "many sons might be brought to glory," and the angels' song be fulfilled, "Glory to God in the highest."

Let us learn, from the scene we have contemplated, that God's greatest works have generally small beginnings. Who would have thought, looking at the feeble child in the arms of a poor woman, that there was the theme of all the prophets, the only hope of man, the greatest wonder of angels, and the fountain of joy to the universe? But so it was. Faith regards not things as they appear, but as God speaks of them, and expects accordingly.

Let us thus act, and we shall never be disappointed. There may be delays, trials of faith, and apparent retrogression in God's dealings; but faith sees all advancing to a glorious final end, hopes in God, and earnestly desires to be a fellow-worker together with Him. The cause of God may appear to be very feeble, and its final triumph improbable, yea, impossible; but we simply inquire what is God's promise respecting it, and what his precept as regards our duty? and by studying these, hope is encouraged and zeal

quickened. We look at Jesus in his mother's arms, a helpless infant, then consider Jesus on his Father's throne, "the Man of God's right hand;" we think of the intervening steps of Nazareth—in the wilderness—at the cross—within the tomb; we again grasp the precious words of Gabriel to Mary, "With God nothing is impossible," and feel persuaded that this assurance shall be found as true of all *things* relating to Jesus as of *himself*. In Him, the exalted *One*, we have the guarantee for the ultimate triumph of the cause we love and humbly seek to serve.

CONVERSIONS BY HYMNS.

SEEING a young person singing whom I knew, I said to her, "Can you say, 'Jesus is mine?'" The question, responded to in the negative, rankled as an arrow in her stricken conscience, until, days after, being in a "stricken state," and the whole household having gathered around her, she poured forth her soul thus:—"Oh! Lord God, have mercy upon me, have mercy upon my poor soul. Oh! Lord, I cannot say, 'Jesus is mine!' I am too wicked. Satan has for a long time been leading me astray. He was making me very wicked; but do Thou, O Lord God, wash away my sins with just one drop of blood from my Saviour's wounds. Oh, my poor soul, my poor soul! Oh, my dreadful sins, what shall I do with them? I would like to tear them from my soul and cast them at the foot of the cross, so that Jesus might drop one drop of His blood on them, and wash them all away."

I told her that the great awakening which was working in her was from God. To this she replied, "Oh, I could die if I had my Saviour now! O God, what would become of me were I to die now? O God, have mercy on me! Oh, if I could only say, 'Jesus is mine!' These sins are pressing on my soul. I cannot bear them. Oh, blessed Saviour, take them away with one drop of Thy precious blood!"

I prayed with her, and said that, before an hour expires, perhaps you may be happy, and enabled to say, "Jesus is mine."

"Oh, I cannot yet sing those dear, precious words! Oh, these dreadful sins oppress me and keep me down! Oh, the devil has

fast hold of me! Oh, what shall I do to get this awful load off my soul, my poor soul!"

I said, "Cast your burden on Him who is able and willing to bear it. He invites you, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. He will save you, and He will give you rest. Remember what He has said, 'Though your sins be as scarlet,' " etc. Having sung the hymn—

"There is a fountain," etc.,

she seemed much impressed with one verse, which we sung over and over again—

"The dying thief rejoiced to see."

She now began to be peaceful, and it seemed as if Satan was giving up the struggle in despair, and resigning her to the arms of Jesus; but not without, like the evil spirit that our Saviour cast out, having rent her sore before he departed. As sometimes an outgoing tenant racks the house he is about to leave, so with Satan, he often tears and rends before he gives up possession.

No pen could describe the anguish of this poor soul. But oh, what a change was on her now! Where before the blackness of despair reigned, all seemed peace and joy; and her smile was that of heaven when she said—"Now I can say, 'Jesus is mine!' I have a hold of my Saviour now; He has taken away this load of sins off my poor soul!"

"Where are they gone?" I asked. She answered, "Down, down, down beneath my feet, and they will never now rise up in judgment against me." Oh! it was delightful to hear the thankful outpourings of her heart to God for taking away her sins, and relieving her well-stricken soul. This scene showed in true colours the dread reality of sin.

On the following Friday at mid-day service she could not repress her sobs and tears, which arose, not from oppression, but from joy that she had found her Saviour.

I feel it is impossible to describe a case of this nature. No words can transfer to others the impressions imparted to the eye, both by the body and mind in suffering, of such as are thus visited by God with a sense of sin. But no Christian, seeing it, would hesitate to say, "This is the finger of God," or doubt such conversion as a

Divine work, any more than he can doubt his own, or that of Saul of Tarsus, and the jailor at Philippi.

Many other instances might be given of persons being convicted by the words of the hymns, or whilst in the act of essaying to sing. At such times the work of the Spirit of God seems greatest, not in opening, but in closing the lips. It is very solemn when many in a congregation are so convicted. The tearful eye, the silent voice, the drooping head, the trembling limb, are visible to all. And it is interesting when individual cases occur in more private circles, where all at once some gladsome scene is shaded over with sorrow. During last spring, a young Christian mother, a widow, took up her residence for a while on one of the more retired shores of our bay. She had her two little ones with her. One of them, five and a-half years old, is thus described :—"Her lips closed at the words—

‘Heaven is my home;’

for she said, ‘I am not *sure* that heaven is my home.’ She was first awakened on board the ‘Cambria,’ one Sabbath afternoon, when her conviction became very deep. For days after, instead of dreaming falsely of heaven, she thought only of being lost. To her mother she said—‘Mother, I am a’raid I am going down to hell; I’m afraid I shall be lost.’ She wished her mother to pray, and then she said, ‘I’ll pray, but only a *fisper*.’ All her mother could catch was, ‘Lord, bless me,’ ‘Lord bless me,’ in a craving little voice. She arose calmer, but her face looked saddened over with emotion. Her mother gave her that verse, ‘Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out!’ and she eagerly caught at the word for her own need, saying, ‘HER that cometh to me,’ etc. ‘I long to come to Jesus,’ she would say; ‘for He says, Now, now, now.’”

Her mother also quoted, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.’ These texts she asked to have repeated to her over and over again, while accompanying her mother to the train. On her way she begged a large Testament, and she found the name of Jesus with great delight.

Some days after, with a bright face, she said, ‘Mother, I’ve no greater joy than to love Jesus. He loves me. While you prayed beside me this morning, I first knew Jesus loved me; and now I know

‘Earth is a desert drear,’

BECAUSE

‘Heaven is my home.’”

TO THE BLESSED SPIRIT.

HOLY GHOST, dispel our sadness,
 Pierce the clouds of sinful night ;
 Come, Thou source of sweetest gladness,
 Breathe Thy life, and spread Thy light !
 Loving Spirit, God of peace,
 Great Distributor of grace,
 Rest upon this congregation !
 Hear, O hear our supplication.

From that height which knows no measure
 As a gracious show'r descend,
 Bringing down the richest treasure
 Man can wish, and God can send.
 O Thou glory, shining down
 From the Father and the Son,
 Grant us Thy illumination !
 Rest upon this congregation.

Come Thou best of all donations
 God can give or we implore ;
 Having Thy sweet consolations,
 We need wish for nothing more.
 Come with unction and with pow'r ;
 On our souls Thy graces show'r ;
 Author of the new creation,
 Make our hearts Thy habitation.

Known to Thee are all recesses
 Of the earth and spreading skies ;
 Every sand the shore possesses,
 Thy omniscient mind describes.
 Holy Fountain, wash us clean,
 Both from error and from sin ;
 Make us flee what Thou refusest,
 And delight in what Thou choosest.

Manifest Thy love for ever ;
 Fence us in on every side ;
 In distress be our Believer ;
 Guard and teach, support and guide :
 Let Thy kind, effectual grace
 Turn our feet from evil ways :
 Show Thyself our new Creator,
 And conform us to Thy nature.

Be our Friend on each occasion,
God, omnipotent to save !
When we die be our salvation ;
When we're buried, be our grave .
And, when from the grave we rise,
Take us up above the skies ;
Seat us with Thy saints in glory,
There for ever to adore Thee.

LOOKING TO JESUS.

BEING very ill, and obliged to keep my bed, my thoughts one evening took a turn to look into the future, thinking it possible the attack, from which I was suffering, might terminate fatally ; and if so, I asked myself, What were my feelings in the prospect of entering another world ?

I bound down my thoughts to get this matter settled. I said to myself, Take no sleep till the questions are fully answered. What hope have you for another world ? From whence will come your support in the moment of passing the Jordan ?

I called to mind how oftentimes I had heard and read of dying transports, of all fear of death being entirely taken away. " Yes," I said to myself, " but such persons were far better than you ; they had not been clogged by sins and infirmities as you have. As for you, how can you expect to realize calmness, much less joy ? " And so communing and being troubled, I gazed upon the window opposite, with eyes wide open, as if I could not sleep,—the thought still pressing with greater earnestness, How shall I meet that hour ?

Gradually I seemed to become aware that the room was increasing with light, a light far beyond that given by the feeble rushlight, before I had time to account for it. It seemed to have no earthly origin, for such as this I had never, never seen. It grew, and grew, and grew, until it filled the room, and I felt bathed with it ; it was as bright as gold, yet so transparent that I could see far through it. I wondered what all this glory meant. I trembled with fear lest it should die away before I understood it. After gazing with much awe and wonderment, not unmixed with a feeling of peace and

security being around me, I thought I saw rising out of the very midst of this golden light a figure — my Saviour on the cross. Words at last seemed to be spoken without a voice—"Look at Me and live; look *from* Me, and *at yourself*, and you will despair. Keep your eye on *Me*; do not fix it on anything save my cross; I am your Saviour; while looking at Me you are safe, and can die in peace. By gazing at My cross, all the saints have passed through the gates of death rejoicing, and so may you." While regarding this scene with intense earnestness, I realized completely the power of the cross to take away all fear of death; nay more, I felt a transport in the thought of dying with such a view of Christ,—to die appeared to be but floating away on a sea of unimagined glory; the longer I gazed the more I comprehended the rapture of many dying Christians. I exclaimed to myself, "No wonder that they longed to depart, that they rejoiced to leave darkness for light, to be received by Him who died for them into the glory that He had with the Father from before the foundation of the world."

At last I felt anxious to give a glance at myself, to see from what this scene saved me; and to do so, I had to turn my head. I tried to look, and just caught a glimpse of what I felt to be my sins. Oh! it was impossible to turn completely round to stare them in the face; one glance was overpowering, looking away from such a brightness. I felt appalled at the blackness behind; and out of the darkness, as I glanced, faster than thought arose hill beyond hill, height upon height interminable, and every hill appeared to be my own sins; then the silent voice said, "Did I not tell you, if you looked at yourself you would despair?" I turned quickly back to rest in peace and joy on that glorious revelation. And oh! how much more glorious it became, after the dark sight of sin and self! Such a holy calm and peace possessed me, that I had a yet more perfect consciousness of how a dying bed could be robbed of all terror, and joy be realized instead. I said to myself, "Now all fear has gone. I, too, could die, if such is God's will, if only I fail not to look as directed." For even after the first impulse to regard myself, I turned once and again that way; but each time with a shudder I closed my eyes upon that sight, and thanked God that He did not command me to fix my gaze there, but drew me, of His own goodness and mercy, to rejoice in the glory of the cross of his beloved Son. A power I had to look behind; but I was conscious

of a power far greater constraining my raptured gaze, until at last it was rivetted on that marvellous glory that beamed around me. While rejoicing with uplifted eyes on the holy and Divine effulgence emanating from the cross of the Crucified One, I perceived the vision was gradually fading from view—it had gone—and I neither stirred or moved; but with eyes still open, I thanked God for such a wondrous manifestation of His mercy to me, in showing me the power He has to make “a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are.” It was nothing to me what others might think of the relation of it as a vision; to me it was a message sent by God; none could rob me of the sight I had seen. It is as real and fresh in my memory, and clear to my eye, as on the night I saw it.

I now send it into the world, written with but a faint reflection from the reality; for no words can do justice to the ineffable glory of that cross, the gazing upon which gives everlasting salvation to the beholder.

May my eyes ever see the light that continually surrounds the cross of Him “who taketh away the sin of the world.”

H. A. M.

MAKING THINGS PLEASANT.

GROWING out of the facilities for reading which exist now-a-days, there is to be observed a mania for “making things pleasant” on the road to knowledge; and hence amusement and excitement are among the most popular methods employed to inculcate knowledge and inspire a love for reading. Dr. Arnold, speaking of the same evil, once observed—“Childishness in boys, even of good abilities, seems to me to be a growing fault, and I do not know to what to ascribe it, except to the greater number of exciting books of amusement. These completely satisfy all the intellectual appetite of a boy, which is rarely very voracious, and leave him totally palled, not only for his regular work, which I could well excuse in comparison, but for good literature of all sorts, even for history and poetry.” John Sterling, also, in a like spirit, said—“Periodicals and novels are to all in this generation, but more especially to those whose minds are still unformed and in process of formation, a new and more effectual substitute for the plagues of Egypt—vermin that corrupt the wholesome waters and infect our chambers.”—*Self Help*.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE CHRISTIAN'S MODEL.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 4TH, 1860,
BY THE REV. J. CUMMING, D.D.,
AT THE SCOTCH CHURCH, CROWN COURT, DRURY LANE.

"Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps."—
1 PETER II. 21.

LAST Sunday was our Communion festival. I then directed your attention, as that ordinance specially points, to the Atonement—the meritorious sacrifice made upon the cross, by which alone our sins are forgiven, through which alone we have access to God, and because of which alone he bestows upon us grace and glory. That great truth—the only Atonement perfect, infinite, and complete, the ground of our brightest hopes, and the greatest of the Divine gifts—I sought briefly to set forth in the words of the text—"suffered for us." Having spoken on that I will call your attention this day to the great lesson taught by the life and the example of Jesus. We have seen that we have a perfect sacrifice on which alone we trust, and we may add now that we have a perfect model to which alone we should seek to conform. Having seen the perfection and glory of the sacrifice, let us now turn our attention to the beauty and perfection of the model. And what a blessed thought is it that we have such a model. Not the loftiest angel in heaven is fit to be our master; but the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh is a perfect example, conformity to which is acceptable in proportion as it is perfect. Well, now, in order to see what this model was, let us look at the several marks that distinctly belong to him.

First notice the wisdom of Jesus as displayed in the course of his varied biography—a wisdom the most perfect and the most beautiful. Read his sublime Sermon on the Mount, count the beatitudes that are there strung together like pearls—beatitudes that will outlast all the basilicas and temples of the world, and see what wisdom, what love, what tenderness is in these. Read his exquisite parables, every sentiment of which seems to be a very stream of light from heaven irradiating earth with its beauty—see how full of the most practical lessons, the most happy similitudes, the most cheering precepts; he throws forth beautiful truths just as the earth in May throws forth its flowers, or as the sky flings forth the lightning from its clouds, the overflow, as it were, of an inexhaustible wisdom, pervaded by the influence of a loving and tender heart.

The Mother's Magazine. December, 1860.

Notice the different points that he brings up in the course of such teaching ; as, first, the importance of the individual, not because of his gifts, or his righteousness, or his honours, or his genius, but because he has a soul that shall never die. What a grand thought, and what a responsible thought, that in the poorest orphan or widow in this assembly there is a soul that must culminate in eternity itself—that had a beginning, but can never have an end. Look at what he says about the widow. The poor widow comes and casts her two mites into the treasury, whilst the doctors of the law were ostentatiously casting in large sums. What does he tell us ? Substantially this—that these two mites, these two half-farthings, were heavy with toil, and sacrifice, and prayer, and love, and as the poor widow cast them into the treasury they rung as they fell, so loud, that the very sound of them reverberated to the skies ; and God heard the sound of these two mites falling into the treasury, but he heard not the noise of the large sums cast in by them who did their good deeds only in order to be seen of men.

When, again, the Saviour speaks of worship, how exquisite his wisdom. What is right worship with him ? “ The hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father ”—glorious thought, what philosophy ever taught this—“ for God is a spirit, and they that worship him ”—wherever they worship, in whatever tongue they worship, in whatever attitude they worship, on whatever floor they kneel—“ they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth ”—to be accepted before him. Now just remember these truths are so familiar to us that they have lost their freshness, but in those days they must have broken upon the thinking minds of the world like flashes of heaven's own splendour, too grand, too glorious to be the discovery of man, bearing clearly upon their face that they were the revelation of God.

Then, in the second place, in considering this perfect model, just view the pure and lofty morality that he taught. He said thoughts were sins—desires were wicked ; therefore he insisted not upon a change of outward habits first, but of the inner man. The fact is, a man's way of promoting morality is this, to cut off this bad branch and to lop off that, but it is forgotten that the stump remains, and that favouring influences, the rains and the sunbeams, will make the tree to grow again and bring forth fruit as bad as before. What is the Saviour's injunction ? “ Make the tree good, and then the fruit will be good ”—cleanse the springs of action, and then the action will be pure. What sound philosophy, what noble teaching is in that. How just, and yet how, whilst the Saviour thus spake, while he looked on sin with infinite abhorrence, how tender and compassionate to the poor unhappy sinner—“ Neither do I condemn thee ; go, and sin no more.” Where did you ever find such teaching as this ? I need but learn these lessons, to incorporate them into my heart, to be persuaded on the surest grounds that he who taught them was none other than the Son of God.

Let me ask you, in the third place, to study the meekness with which the Saviour constantly spake and acted. It is a very difficult thing for one conscious of greatness not to show it. It is a most difficult thing for one gifted with genius, conscious that he can illuminate the world with its rays, to be humble, meek, and self-denying. It is an attribute of the highest greatness not to show consciousness of its possession. The highest simplicity is always found in the bosom of real sublimity. Now the Saviour, the Son of God, he who spake words that could awaken echoes around the whole universe, lived in obscurity thirty years. I have often thought that if the apostles had been mere deceivers, the inventors of a Messiah, that they never would have made him pass thirty years of his life in obscurity. Then this same Saviour that veiled his own divine and infinite grandeur could say in the midst of his teaching—“ The

foxes of the earth have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but"—O what a world must that have been in which "the Son of God had not where to lay his head."

And then, if you view him at the last supper, you see he takes the towel and wipes the feet of his disciples in order to teach and to show them that he that was greatest among them should always seek to be clothed with humility. Looking still further at the character of Jesus we see no asceticism, no affectation of something peculiar; he has no grotesque dress upon him to strike the vulgar, to draw the attention of the mob. He lived and walked, and sat down at the table, and visited as other men; he had his friends in Martha, Mary, Lazarus, and John, whom he loved. He went under their humble roof-tree for hospitality, refuge, and rest. When invited he sat down at the table of Simon the leper, he went into the house of the Pharisee, and upon all the spots that he visited he left the impress of his consolatory presence—till even the publican's table, the pharisee's home, and Lazarus's fireside became like places where God had been.

Again, notice another trait in his character—his ceaseless beneficence. Of him it could be said with an emphasis far beyond that which could be applied to Howard, or this world's best and greatest philanthropist "He went about doing good." Wherever there was a want to be supplied, a tear to be dried, a broken heart to be bound up, there the Saviour went if only the needy and the sorrowful would accept his ministry. When the blind came to him and asked for sight he gave it. What a grand triumph was that. The most miserable sight to me is a blind man walking in the sunshine. When the Saviour said, "Be thou open," the blind saw. And when the deaf came to him, and the dumb, he touched their ears and unloosed their tongues, and immediately they heard and spoke. He comes upon the widow weeping over her dead son, and beholds Martha and Mary lamenting their dead brother; and instantly he reveals himself no more as a man of sorrows, but as the Resurrection and the Life. He says to the young man, "Arise," and to Lazarus, "Come forth," and instantly the dead live. His whole life was a life of ceaseless beneficence. Such his wisdom that you may find true wisdom; such his meekness that you may feel what true meekness is, such his beneficence, not benevolence—there are plenty of people who are very hard indeed in their sympathies, who are benevolent—but it is beneficence; such was his deep and inexhaustible beneficence that it was not limited to any country, party or coterie; but wherever there was want, suffering, sorrow, there was the presence of him who could mitigate the one and thoroughly remove the other.

Now, let us ask ourselves, Do we go about doing good? I don't ask merely, Do you cease to do evil? So far that is good, but that is merely negative; but I ask, What good have you done? and I ask it especially now, as I am about to beg for our ragged school. How important it would be now if you could look back and say—"If I have not been a very great blessing to the world, I have not been a bane to it. I think I have made the world a little better—a little happier—a little wiser for having passed through it." But what good are you? What real good can you say you have done? I do not mean in order to glory in it. When you shall stand before the great white throne, will it be said of you, my dear friends—"Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." I don't say that every one of you is wealthy and can give largely—that we do not expect. I don't say that every one has influence, but you may depend upon it that where any person wishes to do good there is a marvellous ingenuity brought into play to that end. If you have no money to give, and no time for teaching in the schools—though it is a hard world if it leaves a man no time for doing good—and no talent to develope or concentrate—you may still say a kind word to your neighbour or friend, and ask them to give you something for the ragged schools, the Sunday schools, or for the various other works

of beneficence around this congregation, which I look upon as its brightest and noblest credentials.

Then mark the sympathy of Jesus with human nature. How many-sided it was. How perfect and complete. Though a man of sorrows—though he saw in the not very distant perspective, and perhaps, though he heard the yells of the infuriated mob, and of the misguided Pharisee—he begun his career of beneficence and goodness at a simple marriage. A young couple were about to begin life. They were very poor, but they asked him to be present at their wedding, and he went; and he did so, not to frown upon their young joys, not to censure the enjoyment of the happy hours in life's long pilgrimage, but to sympathise with their joys, to brighten and intensify them all, to increase the wine that failed, and to show that he could rejoice with them that do rejoice, as well as weep with them that weep.

I have noticed some good men—I believe truly pious men who fail in this. Whenever they come into the presence of others, their faces always assume a sepulchral appearance. They confound two different things—sadness and solemnity. A sad face does not necessarily imply a solemn heart. The one may be very sad and yet not solemn, and the one may be very bright and yet really solemn notwithstanding. When ocean waves rise like mountains to the sky, the great depths are untroubled—remaining perfectly still; so there may be a bright sunny face, and a heart full of the most blessed solemnity. Jesus, then, began his first miracle at a wedding feast, and what tenderness he manifested, and respect to human nature. So while we give reverence to whom reverence, honour to whom honour, we ought ever to remember that the grandest thing, the noblest thing—nobler than purple, nobler than coronet or crown, is human nature itself. And when you go even to the most downtrodden and debased, the most poor and wretched, go into their home, not with the loud ostentatious tread of one who cometh with a great deal of form and parade, to do them good; but take off your hat when you enter the most wretched, miserable, filthy room in which the poor widow barely lives, and show that you respect her in her misfortunes. First sympathise with her and then help to relieve her. But to do as I have seen some do when a beggar comes fling half-a-crown at him and tell him to go about his business, you are not doing that man any good. Give the half-crown by all means, but manifest some sympathy at the same time. Let him see that you would do him good if you could; but if you cannot you may at least show that you have a feeling of sorrow for his distressed condition. If you will study the perfect model you will see a most profound respect for human nature.

Notice, too, his human sympathy at the moment when he was bearing the heavy cross to which he was nailed, not for his own sins, but for the sins of others. When he saw those who were always the first to sympathize with him—the mothers and the daughters of Jerusalem—weeping for him, what did he say? “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” And when he looked upon Jerusalem itself—that capital of marvellous privileges—that city of the Great King—that scene of the most glorious and thrilling reminiscences, about to be destroyed for its sins, he did not denounce it in terms of fury, but as he gazed upon it from the Mount of Olives, he said—“Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee—how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not.” Then take his last words again, how exquisitely touching were they. One might have supposed that in his dying agony his thoughts would have been so absorbed in that intense, unsounded sea which no man can ever fathom, but seeing his mother weeping, he commanded her to the care of his favourite apostle. Then, when they shouted in his ears, “If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross,” he

uttered only words of compassion. When he was reviled he reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously.

Let me ask you to look at another phase of his character—for it would take days to dwell upon it—his condescending tenderness to children. This is one of the most exquisite traits in the Saviour's character. Whenever you see a man who does not love children you may be sure there is something wrong about that man. Voltaire despised young people, and children he thought to be not entitled to any notice at all. The disciples even, when the poor ragged mothers in the streets of Jerusalem brought their ragged children to Jesus that he might simply smile upon them as he passed by, interfered and rebuked them. But the master had far more tenderness than the disciples; for he, rebuking them, said—"Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." As if he had said—"Those little ragged boys, covered with dross, may be made jewels on which my name shall be engraved. They are not weeds to be cast into the dust, but sweet spring flowers that will bloom in the sunshine of my countenance in the garden of the Lord." Here is a lesson that you, too, should take an interest in children. Some of you mothers have you no little schools at your own homes, of your own children? Your first duty begins there. If you neglect your own children in order to attend our or any other schools you are doing very wrong. Charity begins at home, but it must not end there, as some people would make it, it must go out to others. Now, what are you doing for schools? I don't say for my schools—but what do you give annually for school purposes? How much do you lay out on this and that luxury? I am not condemning luxuries—but I ask, How much do you spend on schools, and how much do you spend on luxuries? How much do you contribute for the benefit of the miserable children that are around you? I think it would be well for you who are members of this congregation to visit our schools more than you do. By so doing you would come to take a greater interest in them. I visited our infant-school the other day, where there are from two to three hundred infants, and was greatly pleased with the interest and effective discipline which I witnessed. Now, do we all seek, to the best of our ability, to provide education for those children that are in need of our assistance? I leave your own consciences, my hearers, to give the answer.

In the next place, notice how accurate was the estimate which Christ formed of humanity. How rapidly he throws aside the mere material and the outward circumstances, and recognizes the immortal soul that was below. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" See what rich common-sense—if one may so speak without impropriety—what divine wisdom there is in the simple prescription:—"Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." That is to say, don't cease to seek advancement in life. If you are a servant try to become a master, and endeavour while you are a servant to do your duty well. If I were a sweeper of a crossing I would endeavour to be the best sweeper in London; or if I were a shoeblack I would seek to be the best shoeblack—that is perfectly legitimate—but the exhortation is above and before all these things; seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and you will find that that will not impede your success, but will rather strengthen it and cause it to endure.

And to those who were wearying themselves with anxious thought about this world's affairs, and were troubled about many things, he said, "Consider the lilies, they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these." What a humbling thing it is to all this world's material and outward splendour, that there is a beauty in the lily, that there are tints on the violet, that there is a purity in the

snowdrop, that all the fabrics of all the looms, covered with the most exquisite dyes, never can approach. Then he said, If God takes care of these, how much more will he take care of you, O ye of little faith. You will never get on in this world in peace and quiet until you are assured that you are doing a right thing, in a right spirit, from right motives, towards a grand end, and be utterly regardless of the obstacles that are thrown in your way, of the little dogs that bark at you as you pass along, or of those insects that, like flies on a summer day, seek to annoy you. Be sure you are seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, that you are doing everything in a right spirit, that you have a grand cause before you, and a noble motive within you, and your mind will be kept in perfect peace, for what saith the Scripture—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."

Then I will ask you in the next place, in studying the character of Jesus, to look at him in his preaching. His whole life was spent in preaching, sometimes on the hill-side, sometimes in the synagogue, sometimes in the porch of the temple, sometimes upon the sea-shore, and sometimes at the publican's table. Study his preaching, and observe the cumulative figures which add so much blossom and foliage, and consequent interest to his instructions. There was nothing in his preaching of dry metaphysics or dialectic skill to astonish and confound his hearers. He came to save souls, and his preaching was marked by simplicity and common sense and intelligibility, that all could comprehend, so that the common people heard him gladly, and often cried out, "Never man spake like this man." He found a text in the sparrow on the house-top, and another in the grass that groweth up to day, and to-morrow is cast into the oven. He found a lesson in the publican, and a warning in the hypocrite and the pharisee. He felt all nature was eloquent because he had the key-note. He saw all things suggestively, because he looked on them in the light in which they were originally planned. And what wisdom there is in all his conduct when they tried to make him a rebel against Cæsar by the most subtle cunning, and malignant question that could be put, how profound his words; "Master is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or no?" If he should say it was, they would have appealed to the Jews, whether he could be the friend of their nation, and if he should say it was not, they would have gone to Pilate and have said, Here is a man who is a traitor, for he teacheth the people that it is not lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar. But he said, "Show me the tribute money," and the Jew that hated Cæsar was obliged to take the coin out of his pocket, on which was Cæsar's name and superscription. On this, Jesus asked, "Whose superscription and name is this?" They could not help saying Cæsar's. Then the magnificent answer, "Render unto Cæsar the things which you admit to be Cæsar's, and unto God the things you admit to be God's." Now think of the exquisite wisdom there was here, and what a grand lesson still.

Then watch him again when one comes to him and says, "Are there few to be saved?" what was his answer? "Strive thou to enter into the strait gate." And when Peter came to him and said, "Lord, and what shall this man do,"—as if Peter had any business with other people—hear his answer, "What is that to thee"—mind your own business—"follow thou me." Mark the depth of wisdom there is displayed when another coming and complimenting him said, "No man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him." Instantly and quietly disposing of the compliment—or rather taking no notice of it—he announces that grand central truth which should never be ignored or subordinated—"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." In that blessed Saviour was all the meekness of a man, and all the grandeur of a God. Such was the preaching of Jesus.

Then look at the great end of his life, as he tells you to study, to do not his own

will, but the will of him that sent him. He came as the servant of the Father. That is an immense source of comfort to you in affliction, to know that it is not produced by your own wickedness. When you can feel this, then you have grace and strength to bear it. The Saviour often felt it painful to perform the work he was destined to accomplish. When, for instance, he was about to suffer, what did he say—"If it be possible, O my Father, let this cup pass from me." Here we see the man with all his sensibilities working up; but instantly he added, "Not my will, but thine be done." Sometimes, when you are called to drink the bitter cup, you will have a strange experience who never had one to drink—is it sickness, is it sorrow, is it disappointment of heart, is it any of those silent, hidden griefs—the bitterest griefs of all—is it any of those sorrows, then you cannot help saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, do dilute this cup, do lessen the contents of this cup, or take it away." It is perfectly proper to pray to God to save you from suffering, to save you from peril and pain, poverty and sickness; but then it is no less Christian to be able to add—"Not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Then notice the Saviour in his joys. That blessed Saviour had joy, a divine joy in the midst of his afflictions and trials—an inward joy that pervaded all. The Saviour had personal joy, and personal sympathy. He spent many a happy evening, talking sweetly and profitably with Martha and Mary, and Lazarus and John. Who can doubt that. He was man just as literally as you and I are, only sin excepted. But sin is no part of humanity. It is an infection that does not belong to it, and will one day be taken out of it. He was man; but he was also—what you and I cannot be—God as well as man.

But what were his chief joys? "For the joy set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame." And then, speaking of his ignominy, the prophet says, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." On one occasion, it is said of Jesus, that he "rejoiced in spirit;" and on another occasion, that he said, "I thank thee, O Father, lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." What a marvellous statement is that. I marvel how anybody can read it, or any one of the gospels, and not come to the irresistible conclusion that God is here. I wonder how anybody can study that marvellous biography and not see that more than man is here.

Come to the moment of his death, when he hung upon the cross. That mysterious cry that seemed to well up from the depths of some fearful agony, which could not be seen or understood—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" and that prayer for his murderers, so striking—"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do;" that mysterious shout when his heart broke, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost; that hiding of the sun, that rending of the earth, the opening of the graves, that resurrection of the dead,—were all the evidences that this was no death of a mortal, no death of a mere man, but a great central fact in the history of the past and the prospect of the future—a grand atonement made for sin. We never can die as he did, because he died bearing our sins. When the aged Christian dies there is no bitterness in his death; it is simply transference from this earthly to that heavenly; it is a happy and joyous transition. When persons die young there is a greater struggle, because it separates them from all the links that bind them to this world; but when the aged Christian dies, I say it is merely a transference from labour to rest; from the low level of earth to the high level of heaven. It is "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace"—like a swimmer leaving the shore of time, and plunging into the ocean of eternity.

But we cannot die as Christ died; he died as a sacrifice for sin. The issue of all this none can arrest. The ultimate triumphs of the cross are certain. You may depend

upon it that the sufferer in ignominy on the cross on Calvary shall reign in righteousness, and peace, and joy over a dominion wider than the world's sun shines upon. That mock superscription upon his cross was the recognition of a sublime fact. The sceptre put into his hands, derisively, was the memorial and symbol of universal dominion; that circle of thorns was more glorious than a crown, in which every nation on earth planted a jewel. In the pangs and agony of the cross was brought forth a glory that shall never die.

This portrait, which I have been trying, not to sketch, but to present, has been hanging up in the mid-sky for eighteen hundred years. Friends and foes, wise and ignorant, have gazed upon it, and searched it with scrutinizing eyes, and millions of times has the testimony been repeated, "I find no fault in him."

Jesus, then, is to be our model of whatsoever things are pure, and just, and lovely, and of good report. The Holy Spirit can inscribe these lineaments upon our minds. May that Holy Spirit sculpture that divine image upon our hearts, and enable us, while trusting in that finished sacrifice for pardon, ever to look up to him as having left us an example that we should follow his steps.

THE
MOTHER'S MAGAZINE,
AND
FAMILY PREACHER.

Know this ark is charn'd
With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employed.
With spells that impious Egypt never knew :
With invocations to the living God,
I twisted every tender reed together,
And with a prayer did every ozier weave.—Mrs. H. MORR.

Mothers, above all other human agents, hold in their hands the momentous trust of moulding the intellect and the heart of successive generations.

If all women were the Christians they ought to be, how quickly would the world be filled with the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ! The coming generation might live in a new earth, and celebrate the final triumphs of the cross.

LONDON:
JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,
NORTH SIDE OF ST. PAUL'S, AND PATERNOSTER ROW.

1861.

CONTENTS.

	<u>Page</u>		<u>Page</u>
SKETCHES AND ESSAYS:—		Look at Home	180
Another Leaf Fallen	49	Love reigning	240
A Stolen Flower	77	Man's Need for the Sabbath	5
Anticipated Trials	104	My Mother	51
A Model Prayer Meeting	105	Meditations on the Lord's Prayer 79, 127, 147, 193, 219	
A Wise Reluke	149	Maria Theresa and her Children	82
A Mother's Influence upon Genius. 171		Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu	132
A Hint to Young Women	177	Maxims for Parents	226
A contented Farmer	228	Martin Luther and his dying Daughter	266
Alice Raymond's security	247	Nothing Else to Do	55
A Spoiled Boy	265	Novel Reading	73
Be a Mother to your Children	107	Not Seeking Mine Own Profit	100
Change in the Household	172	Never despair even of the most hardened	223
Charlotte Bronte—the Worthy Daughter	179	Old Marlborough Dying	201
Christian Love	202	Our own Cottage	224
Children and Flowers	249	On the birth of a child	246
Early Impressions	225	Politeness	1
Early Education	272	Parental partiality	237
Family Duties and Sins. By Rev. Ralph Wardlaw	69	Parental training	252
Female Piety	141	Parental discipline	261
Family Religion	216	Rest	144
Freaks of Fashion	268	Rest for the Weary Soul	191
Hidden Things	60	Robert and Alexander Haldane	244
Her Silence Saved Me	98	Sympathise with Children	11
Home Affection and Training	107	Subdue your Child's Will	12
How to Kill an Enemy	165	Seek the Lord while He may be found	34
Human Sacrifice	169	Self Cultivation	71
Happy Service	202	Sarah Judson and the Burmese Freebooters	74
How do you bring up your children? 213		Social Intercourse with the World 99	
How to teach Filial Obedience	250	Some Difference	180
Jesus Only	146	Samuel Budgett, "The successful merchant"	243
Keepers at Home	58		
Lucy Elliot	7		
Love wins Love	57		

CONTENTS.

	Page		Page
The Church's Child by Baptism	<u>4</u>	Then I must die	<u>199</u>
The Mother Moulds the Man	<u>12</u>	The Introduction of Inoculation	
The work of Love	<u>21</u>	into England	<u>200</u>
Trial, a Help heavenward	<u>27</u>	The Art of Doing our Best	<u>204</u>
The Lord is thy Keeper	<u>30</u>	The power of kind words	<u>241</u>
The Mother Comforted	<u>31</u>	The Child's Rebuke	<u>269</u>
The Rubs of Life	<u>45</u>	The Worst Children in the World	<u>271</u>
The Worm at the Root	<u>53</u>	We Die Daily	<u>26</u>
The best Jewel to Wear	<u>75</u>	Woman's Work in the Church of	
They that feared the Lord spake		Christ	<u>125</u>
often together	<u>76</u>	What will you do in heaven?	<u>178</u>
The Flower-pot Garden	<u>84</u>	What is Truth? By the Rev. S.	
The Importance of Sanitary Know-		K. Bland	<u>189</u>
ledge	<u>93</u>		
The Church Clock's Message to those			
Around	<u>102, 130</u>		
The Law of thy Mother	<u>117</u>		
The Faithful Wife	<u>120</u>		
Two Golden Rules	<u>150</u>		
The Beginnings of Evil	<u>153</u>		
True Politeness	<u>156</u>		
Thank You	<u>167</u>		
The Eye that Mocketh its Father	<u>167</u>		
To live a life for Heaven	<u>192</u>		
The Service of Waiting	<u>197</u>		

POETRY :—

Art thou a Mother?	<u>218</u>
John xi. 35	<u>36</u>
On the prospect of losing an only	
child	<u>248</u>
The Pebble and the Acorn	<u>83</u>
The Loved and Lost.	<u>124</u>
Time's great Lesson	<u>33</u>

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

The Spiritual Brank. By Rev. Chas. Gordelier	<u>13</u>
The Rule of Judgment. By the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, M.A.	<u>37</u>
Christian Training. By the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of London	<u>61</u>
The Judgment of Unbelievers. By the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, M.A.	<u>85</u>
The Great Deliverance. By the Hon. and Rev. B. W. Noel, M.A.	<u>109</u>
Rest. By the Rev. W. M. Punshon	<u>133</u>
The Young Ruler. By the Rev. Thos. Guthrie, D.D.	<u>157</u>
Funeral Sermon on Mr. Braidwood. By the Rev J. Cumming, D.D.	<u>181</u>
Moral Hindrances to Salvation. By Rev. T. Binney	<u>205</u>
Christ is all. By the Rev. J. H. Ballard, B.A.	<u>229</u>
The Gospel worthy of all Acceptation. By Rev. Chas. Gordelier	<u>253</u>
God Mindful of Man. By the Rev. W. Morley Punshon	<u>273</u>

Sketches and Essays.

POLITENESS.*

"MANNERS maketh man," is an old proverb, and one which ought not to be forgotten by the godly man, who should esteem nothing too insignificant, if, by the practice of it, he could bring honour to his Lord and Master. What a small thing is taking off the hat in a gentleman, or the graceful bow of a lady! and yet, who will say that these trifles do not carry more weight with them than many suppose. They may be justly ranked amongst "*important trifles*." Many of our foreign neighbours have a suavity of manner peculiar to themselves, and by frequent interchange with them of late years, we have, as a nation, imbibed a little of their courtesy, and thus, some of the stiff walls and rough edges of our blunt exteriors, which were a barrier to much cordiality, have been removed; and coarseness or want of manners, is now identical with low extraction and deficient education.

That persons often say polite things which they do not mean, and appear most courteous, when they are acting some deceitful part, I am not prepared to deny; but if their politeness is so agreeable, and their courtesy so winning, as to throw a charm over their actions, which causes straightforward people to be put off their guard—why should we not imitate it for higher purposes and nobler ends? If we turn to the Word of God, as our oracle in small matters as well as in great, we cannot but observe the respectful and truly polished behaviour of all the Patriarchs: of Abraham and Sarah, Joseph and his brethren, Moses with Jethro, and we have an instance of much evil being averted through the courtesy of a woman. I refer to Nabal's churlish manner to David's messengers, which threatened him with severe punishment, when his wife turned away the wrath which he had deserved, by her kind conciliating manner. Then if

* See "*Pleasant Fruit from the Branches of the Vine*." Macintosh and Co., Paternoster Row.

we look at the New Testament, we have examples of true politeness in the nobleman, in Martha and Mary, in the Centurion Julius, and especially in St. Paul; in all of whom we remark *that* humility to superiors, *that* attention to their wants, *that* kindness to others, which are the basis and sources of genuine politeness, and which are often seen amongst us in the courteous bow, the opening of a door, the placing of a chair, and other little things; in fact, "esteeming others better than ourselves."

The deficiency of good manners is sometimes the effect of neglect in early training, but more frequently it is the fault of personal indifference to the opinion of the world, and selfishness, springing from love of ease. Thus, when any extra effort calls for courtesy, we see stiffness and awkwardness instead of ease and elegance. If our manner is naturally cold and reserved, we should cultivate a warm generous one to supersede it; this will not be affectation, for if our hearts are full of kind sympathy, this will be the most sincere way of showing it; and, by practice, it will soon become spontaneous. By this, I do not mean the studied etiquette of the dancing master, but regard to the ordinary rules of society, attention to the little offices of kindness, which are pleasing in our daily intercourse with each other: quiet ease, and self-possession, which have been so beautifully summed up as the "absence of selfishness." St. Peter enjoins us to "be courteous," and to "honour all men," which shews that it is one of the many things "not to be left undone." What paint and varnish are to a solid building, so are polite manners to an educated Christian; giving a charm and a polish to the whole. A "rough diamond" should never be the title of the true Christian, whose genuine politeness springs from love to God and man, and should ever shine with peculiar lustre. In the female character, gentle unobtrusive manners are particularly attractive, while at the same time, the veil of modesty should never be wanting.

"Real religion is full of repose."

It ought to become a second nature to us, silently but sensibly influencing the detail of conduct. "Religion demands and inculcates humility. Neither the blaze of rank, the triumph of coquetry, nor the distinction of beauty or fashion, can really elevate. Religion is the only elevating principle—it gives new motives for cultivating elegance. Christianity is itself full of grace. Ease is the distinction of good breeding." "Christian holiness is the only principle which

imparts unity and consistency to the character." "Render, therefore, to all their due, honour to whom honour." (Rom. xiii.) "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." (Matt. xxii. 21.)

"All customary civil honour and respect are to be cheerfully given to those in power. Christians are not to decline paying the customary respect to the civil powers, on pretence that they are Christ's servants, or that all men are naturally on a level. Difference of rank in society is God's appointment, for the ordinary government of men in society."

"Good people should try to be agreeable as well as good. There is much influence wasted in this world, because it is not adorned by a pleasant manner; for trifling though it may appear, yet it renders insignificant words agreeable, and lightens the weight of advice."

"Whoever and whatever we are, we all possess some influence on those around us, and we might as well attempt to shake off our shadow, as to get rid of this influence on others. It is a solemn thought that we are continually either promoting God's glory, or acting as stumbling blocks. Our life is an epistle known and read of all men, and could we ever be aware how far the actions, opinions, and lives of others have received a bent and impulse from doings and habits of ours, it would, perhaps, greatly surprise us, to find what wide-spread results have followed from matters which we had regarded as trifles, or perhaps not regarded at all."

"'Arise, shine.' Christians are to become like Christ—little suns to rise and shine upon this dark world. He rises and shines upon us, and then says to us, 'Arise, shine.' This is Christ's command to all on whom He has arisen. Christians, ye are the lights of the world, poor, feeble, dark, and sinful though you be; Christ has risen upon you for this very end, that you may 'arise and shine.' Be like the sun which shineth *every* day and in *every* place. Wherever he goes he carries light, so do you; some shine like the sun in public before men, but are dark as night in their own families. Look more to Christ, and you will shine more constantly. Shine with Christ's light. The moon rises and shines, but not with her own light—she gathers all from the sun: so do you. Shine in such a way that Christ shall have all the glory. They shine brightest who feel most their own darkness, and are most clothed in Christ's brightness. Wherever you go, make it manifest that your light and grace all come from Him—that it is by looking unto Jesus that you shine.

Make it the business of your life to shine. Did not Christ rise upon you that His glory might be seen upon you? Your truest happiness is in shining; the more you shine in your family the happier you will be; shine there, that without the word you may gain their souls."

THE CHURCH'S CHILD BY BAPTISM.

I WAS recently in the village of G——, Alabama, when the ordinance of baptism was administered to several children by the pastor of the Presbyterian church. When about to administer the ordinance to an interesting-looking child about ten months old, the pastor paused for a moment, and, addressing himself to the congregation at large, observed in the following language, as nearly as can now be recollected:—

"This is the child of a Christian mother who draws nigh the end of her earthly pilgrimage; a few weeks, at most, must terminate her duties and privileges on the earth. But before departing hence, she anxiously desires that this her infant son should be dedicated to her covenant God and Redeemer in the appropriate ordinance of the gospel. She knows, however, that she will not be spared to perform on behalf of her child the duties involved and set forth in that ordinance; she will not live to instruct, and watch over, and pray for this child. By faith she presents it unto Christ; and unable to bring it in person, she has sent it here, to the house of God, to be publicly dedicated to Him by His minister, and in the presence of His people. She desires me to say to you—the members of this church—that she gives her child to the church—to you, to be instructed and watched over, and taught to pray, and keep the commandments of God, as it would be her duty to do were her life spared. This is the message of this dying Christian mother to you; and now that I, as your pastor and organ, administer the ordinance of baptism to this child, let us realise that upon you and me rest the fearful responsibility of performing on its behalf the duties of that mother when she shall be removed. We are to 'bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' We are to pray for it, and teach it to pray. We are to teach it and have it taught to read the Word of God. This is our child—the child of our church."

The writer has witnessed many scenes which deeply affected his

own heart, and by which others seemed also affected no less deeply. But seldom, if ever, has he witnessed one more touching than this. In the large congregation present there was not one heart unmoved. Many gave utterance to their irrepressible emotions in streaming tears, and in sobs audible all over the house. It will be long—it must be so—before any member of the church then present, can see that child without feeling again the vibrations of the chord which was then touched, and without lifting the heart in earnest prayer to the God of Abraham for His blessings upon the dear lamb of the fold. Has not this christian mother, by this act of her faith in God and his ordinance, secured for her child, so soon to be left motherless, a heritage worth all the “treasures of Egypt?” The mother, indeed, yet lingers in the flesh—lingers in hourly expectation of the summons to depart to be with Christ. But behold the mercy of her covenant God in whom she trusts. Since the incident here detailed, a daughter then without Christ or salvation, has turned unto the Lord, and now rejoices in hope of His glory; and the husband—the father of that child—has become a man of prayer, and kneels daily by the bedside of that dying, but happy, happy wife and mother. God blesses those who honour His ordinances. If all Christian parents were to cherish and exhibit the same confidence in the scriptural authority and high worth of the ordinance of baptism on behalf of their children, what blessings might we not anticipate from it? How soon would the last objection to it be swept away before the multiplied tokens of God's favour—His certain and special favour!

MAN'S NEED FOR THE SABBATH.

If you wish to get the full good of your mind, you will give it the rest which its Creator indicates: you will give it sleep, and you will give it the Sabbath. The mind is not an artesian well, but a land-spring. The supply is limited. If you pump continually the water will grow turbid, and if, after it grows turbid, you continue still to work it, you will not increase the quantity, and you will spoil the pump. There is a difference of intellectual activity, but the most powerful mind is a land-spring after all; and those who wish to preserve their thoughts fresh, pure, and pellucid will put on the Sabbath padlock. In the subsequent clearness of their views, in the calmness of their judgment, and in the free and copious flow of

ideas, they will find their speedy recompense. Dr. Hope, of London, was an ardent student. When compiling the works which created his fame, there were months together when he never opened a newspaper or an amusing book; but then, in the full flash of his brilliant practice, he contrived to attend church twice a-day, and kept the Sabbath as devoutly as any private Christian. "During this disputed election," says his biographer, "Dr. Hope did not depart from his old principle of observing Sunday. All books and papers were cleared away on Saturday night, and, engrossing as the subject of the election was, it was not permitted to be mentioned in his family. While he was justified by the Scriptures in expecting the Divine blessing on such conduct, the actual relief afforded by this day of rest from agitating and laborious employment was so great, that a similar course might safely be recommended to those who seek no blessings beyond those of this life." Is the reader a student, or a lawyer, or one whose labour is literature? Setting altogether out of view that blessing which attends compliance with a Divine command, and that curse which must sooner or later overtake transgression, recollect that experience, no less than revelation teaches that the mind requires its Sabbath—a vacancy from toil, or a variety of work; and to refuse it this periodical repose is to violate its constitution and impair its powers. But we should convey a very erroneous impression if we represented the Sabbath as merely a bodily rest, or a means of mental invigoration. The Sabbath was doubtless made for man—for man the worker, and man the thinker; but much more for man the heir of immortality. In His tender mercy, God has sent us a gospel—a revelation which not only proffers an endless and blessed life hereafter, but undertakes to prepare us for it. Unhappily, however, the drift of this sinful world is all away from that gospel; and like weeds on the current, or insects wafted in the bosom of a sunny breeze, we have only to surrender ourselves to the course of this world—we have only to go with the jovial and godless multitude, and a few short years will plunge us into perdition. To get into the knowledge of the gospel, or the enjoyment of the Christian life, we have need of diligence. We would need to be rescued from the importunate cares, and still more importunate follies, on every side of us, and would need to get into some sequestered retreat where the voice of Jehovah may be heard, and where the infinite realities have time to brighten on the view.

The Sabbath is that noiseless retreat. It is the day, more than any other day, when the Lord Jesus has said to the weary worldling, "Come unto me and I will give you rest." It is the day when the strait gate has oftenest opened and ushered happy pilgrims on the path of peace. Even the gospel without the Sabbath, would have done the world little good; for without the Sabbath the world would never have taken time to attend to the gospel.—*The Rev. James Hamilton, D.D.*

LUCY ELLIOT;

OR, HOLD FAST YOUR PROFESSION.

It was towards the close of a sweet day in June, the golden sun was setting o'er the distant hills, and the fresh dews were falling. Softly the perfumed breeze stole through the twining woodbine, as it stirred the thick curls of a young girl, who sat by an open window. Her face was young and fair, but it wore an anxious, troubled expression, and her eyes often wandered from the sacred page, which lay open before her. "Once, only once more," she said, as if thinking aloud; "and I need not dance." Again she bent over her Bible; but the words "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," met her eye, and the shade deepened on Lucy Elliot's brow, for she felt she must deny herself, if she gave up all to follow Jesus. At that moment the door opened, and a girl, apparently several years older than Lucy, entered the room.

"I have only a minute to wait," she said, after the greetings were over; "but I have been to 'The Priory,' and just looked in to tell you that Friday week is the day fixed for the pic-nic. It will be a grand affair," she continued; "a band from B—— has to be in attendance, for the ball in the evening."

"For the ball!" said Lucy, unconsciously repeating the words of her companion.

"Yes, to be sure; but what is the matter? why do you look so solemn over it?"

"I do not think I shall go."

"Not go! what can you mean? Mrs. St. Clair expects you."

"I did not positively promise, and I think I ought not to go," was the half regretful reply.

"Ought not! why?"

"Because, as you already know, I have resolved to give up all these things."

"Nonsense, Lucy; those religious opinions of yours are perfectly ridiculous. What *can* be the harm of a little innocent amusement?"

"I have felt the harm those innocent amusements do, Maria; and I know that 'she who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.'"

"But a pic-nic is so different, even the strictest could not object to it; and as to the ball, you need not dance."

"Do promise you'll come," pleaded Maria; "and," she added archly, "remember, Captain Hammond is to be there; you must not disappoint him."

The blush which dyed Lucy's cheeks was but for a moment; for, with the thought, Must I give up all, give up *him* for Jesus? again the shadow gathered, and like the "young man" of old, she was "sorrowful."

It was only a few months before, that Lucy was the gayest in the little circle around B——; but gradually a change had passed over her. Several parishes, in her neighbourhood, had been visited with seasons of revival; and although in B—— there had been no stirring among the dry bones, still the sound of the Lord's doings had reached to her, and she too had been led to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?"

Very pleasant to the young disciple seemed the path to glory, and sweet to her ear was the voice of her "Beloved." She thought she could lean on His strong and tender arm, and, lifting up her eyes to the Everlasting Hills, exclaim, "There is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee." Heretofore, few trials or temptations had beset her path; it was only now she was to learn that the Christian's life is a warfare. And, would she "fight the good fight of faith?" would she "withstand in the evil day?" would she hold the beginning of her confidence stedfast unto the end? There, on the border land she stood and lingered. Ah! she lingered and looked back. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," said her loving Friend; but she heard not now that voice; for one she had too easily learned to love, was wooing her back to the world. For an arm of flesh, she left the Everlasting Arm, that could have shielded her from every danger. Now she could no longer exclaim, "There is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee." "Once, only this once," she said, "and then I will give up all." Ah! poor

backslider, "no man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Swiftly the summer days came and went; and among the gay party assembled at "The Priory," on that sweet June morning, none was gayer than Lucy Elliot, as, laughing and talking, she leant on the arm of the rich, dashing Captain Hammond. A few months more, and she had become his wife. They took up their residence in a fashionable neighbourhood, and were remarkable for the gaiety of their lives, and the expensive, fashionable style of their establishment. And was she happy? Ah! beneath the smiling exterior, who could tell the desolation of that heart, the void there, which no earthly good could fill! Who could picture those moments of gloom, those dreadful moments, when the future, all dark and terrible, rose before her, and she seemed to hear ringing in her ears, the words, "If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment!"

Years passed. And Lucy Hammond is still in 'the place of hope;' but no ray of promise streams on her benighted eye, and her face is pale and weary, and the sun of her earthly prosperity is growing dim. Her husband, for whom she had sacrificed so much, is strangely changed, and, in scenes of recklessness and dissipation, his love, once so ardent, is growing cold. But she has a boy, a beautiful blue-eyed boy—her only one; and oh, how she loves her child! In the long summer days, his merry laugh still sends gladness to her heart; and in the winter nights, "when cold the north winds blow," his soft arms are around her neck, and his little curly head, pillowed on her bosom, comforts her for the absence of his father. But a hand she could not see was beckoning him away; and in early spring, when the snow-drops had hung out their stainless bells, he closed his blue eyes, and "was not."

Like one bereft of reason, the anguished mother hung over her dead boy. Gently her friends tried to comfort her. They told her that Jesus had gathered the little lamb in His arms, and in "fields of light" he was waiting, "not lost, but gone before."

"Tell me not so," she cried in agony; "to me he is lost—lost eternally. I shall never see him there!"

Her friends looked at each other in amazement, they knew not what to answer.

"Yes," she cried wildly, "once the door was open; it is closed now. Once—it is many years since then—I walked with Jesus, but I left Him. Yes, I left Him, though He strove hard with me; and now He has forsaken me!"

"Oh, pray, pray," they pleaded, "if, perchance, the Lord may still be gracious!"

"Ah!" was the reply, "since that fatal time, I cannot pray; there is nothing, nothing for me now, but 'a fearful looking for of judgment!'"

As month after month passed, she sunk into deeper despondency, only varied at intervals by moments of wild despair. In vain were the efforts of her husband and friends to rouse her from her melancholy; that "fearful looking for of judgment" was ever before her eyes.

Thus passed the summer months; and winter had come, with its snows and tempests, when, one morning, Lucy was not found. All through the house they sought her, and by the little grave of her boy, but she was not there.

The untrodden snow lay glittering 'neath the wintry sun; and there, with beating hearts, they trace a little footprint. Straight from Lucy's window they follow it, through the garden walks, past the silent fountain, down among a grove of leafless trees, to the border of the lake; and there it ceases. Yes, their fears are realized; the last scene is acted; and Lucy is no more. An hour after, she lay robed in the sad habiliments of the grave, cold and still. That fearful judgment she *looked* not for now; by her own deed she had entered on it.

Ah! my young friends, listen to the voice that arises from this gloomy bed of death: "If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment." Are you a young disciple of Jesus? Do you wish to walk with Him, and to finish your course with joy? Then, *hold fast* your profession; "for we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end." Dear fellow-pilgrims, "cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." "For it would have been better not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto you."

SYMPATHISE WITH CHILDREN.

Do you want to learn how to make the children love you? Do you want the key that will unlock the innermost recesses of their natures? Then sympathise with them always. Never allow yourself to ridicule any of their little secrets. Never say "Oh, pshaw!" when they come to show you a new kite or marvellous top, and, "I can't be troubled," when the hard knot won't be untied, and two and two obstinately refuse to be made four on their little slates. Kites and knots are only the precursors of older thoughts and deeper trials, which the parents may one day plead in vain to share! Don't laugh at any of a child's ideas, however odd and absurd they may seem to you; let them find your sympathy ready in all their wonderments and aspirations. Is there any man so wise in his own conceit as to have forgotten that there was a time once when he also was a child? The little folks are too much crowded out in this world; people generally seem to think they can be put in anywhere, or made to eat anything, or crammed into any out-of-the-way corner, to amuse themselves anyhow. We don't agree with any of these cross-grained wiseacres. Children have as much right to the carriage window and easy seat as anybody. It don't take much to make a child love you and trust in you; and the benefits to him are absolutely incalculable. Oh, how much better it is for children to bring all their cares, and troubles, and temptations, under the gentle eye of a wise parent. What a safeguard it is for them to feel, that there is always a kind ear to listen to their doubts and griefs, and a gentle shoulder for their little heads to nestle against! Respect their rights; never think you can say bitter things in their presence, or do unjust actions. They are the finest discriminators of fair and unfair in the world. Somebody says: "When you are inclined to be cross with children for being slow to learn, just try a moment to write with your left hand. See how awkward it proves, and then remember that with children it is *all* left hand." Preserve us from those precocious infants who spring up ready-made philosophers and casuists; cherry-cheeked little orphans are infinitely preferable. Above all, do not be ashamed to *know* that you love them. Remember, they will be men and women some day; and the slightest word which may influence their future lives should become a thing of moment in our eyes.

THE MOTHER MOULDS THE MAN.

THAT it is the mother who moulds the man, is a sentiment beautifully illustrated by the following observation of a shrewd writer:—

“When I lived among the Choctaw Indians, I held a consultation with one of their chiefs, respecting the successive stages of their progress in the arts of civilised life; and, among other things, he informed me that at their start they made a great mistake—they only sent boys to school. These boys came home intelligent men, but they married uneducated and uncivilised wives; and the uniform result was, the children were all like their mothers. The father soon lost all his interest both in wife and children. ‘And now,’ said he, ‘if we would educate but one class of our children, we should choose the girls; for when they become mothers they educate their sons.’” This is the point, and it is true. No nation can become fully enlightened when mothers are not in a good degree qualified to discharge the duties of the home-work of education.

SUBDUE YOUR CHILD'S WILL.

How seldom do we see a person, whose self-will was not restrained in childhood, becoming a Christian in later years! “A child left to himself,” not only “bringeth his mother to shame,” but almost surely brings ruin upon himself. The parent who neglects, with love and firmness, to subdue his child, in the language of the wise man, “hateth his own son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.”

The son of pious, but too indulgent parents, left home, and ran into evil courses. His father and mother were almost heart-broken, but wrote continually to him letters overflowing with affection and earnest entreaties to leave his sinful ways.

A friend was in the room when one of these home-letters came. He read it seriously, and evidently with a troubled conscience; then sat a few moments lost in thought; when, suddenly rising, he dashed the letter in the fire, exclaiming, “There, let them warn, write letters, pray, and whine; it is of no use. A good whipping, well laid on, ten years ago would have done more to save me.”

Submission to parental authority is a preparative for submission to God's will, while continual self-indulgence fosters the evil passions of the heart, and strengthens its natural enmity to God.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE SPIRITUAL BRANK; OR, THE CHRISTIAN'S MOUTH CLOSED.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, NOVEMBER 11TH, 1860,
BY CHARLES GORDELIER,

AT NEW BROAD STREET CHAPEL.

(Rev. W. O'Neill's.)

"O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise."—PSALM li. 15.

SOME of you may, perhaps, remember that on this day month I addressed you from the words of the eighty-first Psalm, tenth verse—"Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." I then endeavoured to explain that God in calling upon his children to open their mouth wide, he called upon them to exercise and fully expand their faith in him, and receive thereby those blessings he was ready to bestow. This afternoon we have, on the other hand, the believer calling upon God to unfasten his lips, so that with an open mouth he might show forth the praises of God.

To praise God is certainly, the duty, the privilege and the happiness of the Christian. Praising God is the blissful employment of all the inhabitants of heaven. Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim are for ever sounding his lofty praise; before him these mysterious created beings are perpetually veiling their faces and saying—"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory." The spirits of just men made perfect by the righteousness of Christ now before the throne are for ever singing the high praises of him who hath redeemed them by his blood. Praise, too, is the business of the saints on earth, the people which God hath formed for himself, they shall show forth his praise—"Praise waiteth for thee, O God in Zion." To praise God is both the desire and the aim of all who have been called out of darkness into his marvellous light.

But what is praise? This is important to know. We read—"All thy works praise thee." This is said by David himself, when speaking of the works of God. Again he says, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High." "Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent." And again, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," Psalms 50, 92, and 148. Praise is a confession and acknowledgment of the wonderful excellences of God; it is a

The Mother's Magazine.—Jan., 1861.

feeling of admiration in the heart and gratefully expressing it by the tongue. Praising God is expressing admiration of his works in creation, in providence, and in the manifold operations of his grace in the hearts of his people. The contemplation of God's works, his truth, and his lovingkindness leads the devout soul to find his only happiness to sing to the honour of his name, and to make his praise glorious.

The Psalmist, David, king of Israel, was one who well understood the subject of which we have been speaking; his psalms abound with expressions of praise in every conceivable form, and he is well called the sweet Psalmist of Israel. How much he enjoyed and valued praise may easily be known by reading his psalms where he speaks of being deprived from attending the House of God either by affliction, distance, or persecution. We know his heart, it was him who said—"I will praise the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth." But ah, poor David, it was not always so; he could not always praise; when his soul was in prison, a spiritual prison, his prayer was—"Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name;" and if we are rightly informed as to the occasion of the psalm from whence we have taken the text, we can easily perceive *why it is, how it is, and when it is* that a Christian man cannot praise God.

David appears in the psalm before us as an humble suppliant for that mercy which he had so disregarded and abused; he whose province it was to administer justice, and protect the innocent, forfeited all claim to his character as a man of honour and as a king over that nation who were chosen to be a holy nation—a peculiar people—the people which God had chosen for himself, of whom he said—"They shall show forth my praise," and in which David, their king, was to take the lead. By the sad occasion, which is but too well known, David not only brought dishonour on himself, dishonour on the nation, but dishonour on the cause of God; not only so, he deeply wounded his own conscience; he lost the light of God's countenance; he wofully felt what an evil and bitter thing it was to depart from the living God, and now, "robed with sackcloth, and crowned with ashes," entreats for mercy, laments the corruption of his nature, prays for pardoning and cleansing grace and to be restored to former favor.

In the text before us we have a prayer that the lips may be opened, so that the mouth may be set at liberty—implying, of course that the lips are closed. Sin, in the regenerate heart, is ever followed by guilt, sorrow and shame; and if by penitence, with grief; grief, especially when accompanied by remorse, shuts up the soul in the blackness of its own prison, deprives it of the power of looking for divine aid; this the quickened soul feels to be a loss more than it can sustain; not to praise God! not able to look up! to feel itself weak, and yet not able to look to the strong for strength. Oh, sin! what hast thou done; thou hast taken away my hope; my hope, my honour are laid low in the dust. I now no longer can speak the praises of him

whose mercies and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. But as if the soul had all at once come to itself it resolves and says—I will yet pray for pardon, I will pray to God as when I first sought his forgiving love, I will pray that he may remove his stroke from me, for, like Cain, I feel my punishment is greater than I can bear.

In the text there is to be observed what is called a metonymy of speech, i.e., the effect is spoken of for the cause—the lips are asked to be opened, meaning the heart, the affections, the fact being, if the heart is open—free—the lips are so too; on the contrary, if the heart—the feelings—are shut up, so are the lips. David in thus asking for the effect to be produced, and with the best aim, asks, also, for the cause—namely, his heart to be set at liberty; he has sinned, he wants pardon, peace, joy and till he has this realised there can be no song of praise from him; to praise God is his main object in asking for his lips to be unclosed, it has been always his delight, but now, his mouth is closed; he feels a guilty man—and like a guilty man he has nothing to say; if ever his mouth is opened again he feels God must do it, hence his prayer—"O Lord open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

My impression is, from the peculiar language employed, that it is a figure of speech involving an allusion to a mode of punishment which was common in some countries, and most probably in Palestine, (see Psalm xxxix. 1, in the margin,) certainly it was well known in this country, though many years since.* The instrument of punishment was called a "brank," literally a muzzle, made of iron, and employed for keeping close the mouth of offenders against good morals, especially those who with their tongue had disgraced themselves and annoyed others. At all events, if the "brank" is not here alluded to, the effect in a spiritual point is the same, and I shall look at it in this light. God puts a "brank" upon all who offend against him, and until God removes it the mouth is not at liberty. God means to punish, but he means to do the offender good notwithstanding, and when he is truly humbled, penitent, and returns with all his heart in earnest prayer, God will then remove the "brank."

Observe, then, I.—THAT GUILT IS A "BRANK" ON THE MOUTH OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

This I am sure you will not deny, indeed, I am sure you will at once admit it; you know, and I know too, that when we have sinned, we have found it to take away the use of the tongue—who can praise God with guilt on his conscience? Guilt empties out the heart of all good emotions and feelings. He can't love as he did before—he can't sing as he did before—he even can't pray. Oh, when a child of God sins he makes himself a miserable being; he has shut himself out from enjoying the communications of God's favor, his lovingkindness! there is no communion now

* A representation of this was given in the October part of the *Leisure Hour*.

—like as when one friend wrongs another, what a shutting up there is of intercourse with each other—there is no freedom of speech, no interchange of kind looks, no hearty greet of the hand; so it is with the soul and God, it was so with the first man Adam; before he sinned he was holy, happy, and enjoyed intercourse with God, he loved to hear his voice, and at God's call his willing feet ran to meet him in swift obedience; but when he transgressed, oh how reversed the scene; God calls, but no answer—"Adam, where art thou?" no answer; again—"Adam, where art thou?" no answer. No, the mouth is stopped, Adam is brought guilty before God; guilt was a "brank" upon his lips, he could not speak, he had nothing to say, so he went and hid himself. But was Adam the only man who hid himself when God called to him? when he called to him in love, called to him in mercy? Oh, no, there are some of you here, I doubt not, whom God has called and called again, but you have not answered. You have striven to hide yourself; your mouth has been shut up. Ah! it is sin that has done it. Sin has taken away the use of your tongue.

It was sin, too, that closed the mouth of Zacharias; not sin in its grossest form as in David's case; nor yet in the form of disobedience, as in Adam's, but it was the sin of unbelief. He had no faith, he could not "take God at his word," and so he was struck dumb for a season. Oh, my friends, I'm afraid there are too many of us who, like him, have found no liberty for the tongue because of unbelief and doubt. Doubt and unbelief prevents many a soul from praising God. Faith is like a lark—it rises from earth, and as it soars higher and higher it sings stronger and stronger; but unbelief—base, blind unbelief—is like a mole, it runs from the light, burrows and buries itself in the earth, knows nothing of praise, never looks up; unbelief never sung a song in its life. Unbelief, like a "brank," keeps the mouth closed.

But further, self-righteousness will keep a man's mouth shut. Like the man who accepted the invitation to the wedding but did not accept the wedding garment, what could he say for refusing it? Nothing, he was speechless; he knew the terms, but he refused to submit. Did he think he should pass muster and not be noticed? Vain man! He could talk to his fellow guests freely enough; but to the king who came in to see the guests not a word could he say—the "brank" of guilt and shame had closed his lips. Oh, how many there are who can get into churches and chapels and talk with their fellow members so as to pass for Christians, but before God have not a word of praise to utter. They have never submitted to the righteousness of Christ. They cannot put off the old man with his deeds; or they think their own doings and moral worth will save them; they prefer their own method to God's. Alas for them!

"Self-righteous souls on works rely,
And boast their moral dignity;
But if I lip a song of praise,
Each note shall echo, grace, free grace."

My hearer, let me ask you if you know anything of the mouth being stopped, before God, on account of sin, guilt, shame, unbelief, self-righteousness! If you do, you know something of David's experience; shut up as in a prison—put upon "the silent system"—not a word can you speak; not a word dare you speak; but you can feel. Well, blessed be God for that. Though not lively, yet you are alive. You well remember, I dare say, when God quickened your soul. He opened your eyes, your heart, and your mouth too. But now, your tongue is silent, your mouth is padlocked, you cannot open it. Sin condemns, conscience accuses, but though the soul is shut up in the prison of his own guilt, he yet sees a glimmer of light shining through the chink of his past experience, he mourns his lonely state, he grieves, but

he hopes, and his petition is—"Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name."

Let us observe, II.—THAT THE RENEWED SOUL DEPLORES SIN IN ITSELF.

Nothing can be more sure than that David hated and deplored the sin into which he fell, and doubtless was the melancholy occasion of this and other Psalms being written which bear his name. No man could appeal to the heart-searching God in the way David did if he was not sincere; to doubt this would be to take away the value of testimony altogether. David sinned; David mourned; David repented; David prayed; David was reclaimed—and blessed be God!—David again praised God. Now, to make a man feel the sinfulness of sin, it must be obvious that he could not go on in a sinful course and be in the enjoyment of God's presence at the same time. No man has ever found it so, nor ever will. It is utterly impossible that it should be so in the very nature of things. We are called from sin to holiness—"Be ye holy," saith God, "for I am holy." God hates sin—so should we; if we love God why should we love sin? Christ hath no fellowship with Belial. Sin is an enemy to God and to the soul of man.

Then to make a man feel the hatefulness of sin, he must be made to feel its bitterness, its awful consequences; he must be made to feel that God is of pure eyes; that he cannot look upon iniquity. But more than this, he must know something of God's character—of his love—of his mercy. If he has tasted something of God's grace—the preciousness of Christ—reflected on the cost of the ransoming power in Christ's atonement, he will then feel and know something of the hatefulness of sin; his language will be, not—"Oh, what shall I suffer," but "Oh, what have I done!" Not so much dreading the consequences of sin, but shocked more because of having committed it against God and his own conscience; of having grieved the Spirit, and of its having put him out of the power to enjoy the presence of God till he has been rebuked, chastened, and punished; neither can there be any restoration of, peace, joy, freedom of spirit, or freedom of speech, till God has unlocked his lips, taken the "brank" off his lips; till then he cannot attempt to praise God; his ear must be reassured of God's lovingkindness, his heart must be set at happy liberty, for it is impossible for the regenerate heart to speak *of* God, *for* God, or *to* God, if his conscience is upbraiding him. "Oh, sin," says the soul, "how it has destroyed me; how it has withered my affections, how it has blighted my hopes, how it has clouded my sun, how it has darkened my prospect. Oh, sin, thou hast taken away my evidences; I now hate thee with a perfect hatred; I hate vain thoughts. Oh, woe is me, if grace prevent not, I am undone. Oh, Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me, I feel I am all wrong, but do thou put me right; my soul has gone astray like a lost sheep, yet will I not forget thy precepts."

III.—My third observation is—GOD'S PRAISE MUST COME FROM THE HEART.

God receives nothing from the hypocrite, nor yet from the formalist. Dr. Watts thus expresses it:—

"Their lifted eyes salute the skies,
Their bending knees the ground;
But God abhors the sacrifice
Where not the heart is found."

Nor does God receive praise from the thoughtless tongue. Many there are, it is to be feared, take up the matter of singing the praises of God more to please themselves than to serve God; these persons seldom reflect on the subject they are singing, nor keep in view the object of praise; it is the tune that occupies their thoughts; and

often, it is to be found, that if the tune is not one of their fancy they will not sing at all, plainly showing that to praise God is not their object, however much they may like psalmody. Oh, my friends—my young friends in particular—be not more occupied with the tune than with the song; remember, God's praise must come from the *heart* as well as the tongue.

But let us observe: as it is "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," and with the mouth confession is made before God, so "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." When the heart is full of love to God the lips will be full of praise; if the heart indites good matter, the pen is as in the hands of a ready writer, and it can then speak of things concerning the king.

The truth is, the believer can only praise God with the heart when the heart is filled with joy; filled with joy in the Holy Ghost; filled with all joy and peace in believing; filled with a sense of pardoned sin; filled with gratitude for mercies bestowed—for favors received; filled with an assurance of Divine love; filled with the manifestations of Divine love; filled with bright views of the Saviour's glorious person, his work, and character; filled with devotion and adoration in the contemplation of those rich truths which God reveals in his word whereby he rejoices in the fulness of Christ that he is made unto him everything he can possibly want both for this world and the next. He finds heavenly realities on earth; the very thought that God is his God—his father—fills his soul with joy; to feel that Christ is his, that Christ died for him, that Christ is his mediator, his advocate, his intercessor, oh, those things make him feel full of joy unbounded, unspeakable; it is, indeed, Christ in him the hope of glory. This it is that helps the soul to praise God, it will never be content with anything short of it; hence the prayer of the Psalmist—"Oh, Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

IV.—Let me now observe, in the fourth and last place, THAT PRAYER IS GOD'S KEY TO UNLOCK THE HEART.

I have already explained to you how the heart of the regenerated soul is shut up by sin, unbelief, and so on; that when the heart is thus shut up, the lips are closed, and God cannot be praised. Not to praise God is like death to the renewed, heaven-born soul. This we've already shown. But, you see, *all* I've been putting before you is "*heart-work*." My hearers, TRUE RELIGION'S ALL HEART-WORK; without the heart, there's no religion that will do you or me any good; there is no praising God without the heart is quite right with God. This point has been already touched. You have seen the connection between praise and the state of the heart; how the one is depending on the other. Now we have to shew you, how the state of the heart is connected with and depending on prayer.

Prayer, I've just said, is God's key; that is, it is the key which God puts for the sinner's use; it is put into the bosom of every child of God; it is ready, there, for meeting every difficulty, every trouble, every trying case. You remember Bunyan's pilgrim, "Hopeful," how, with his key of promise, he opened every gate in Giant Despair's castle. That key Jacob possessed, and with it, opened up God's resources, and obtained what he wanted. "And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good."

"Prayer was appointed to convey,
The blessings God designs to give."

Prayer unlocks the heart. When the soul, feeling itself destitute, miserable, helpless, falls back upon God, it prays for help; prays for grace; prays for strength; prays for the light of his countenance; prays for the restoration of the joy of his

salvation; and in doing so, the soul gathers strength; faith is invigorated, hope is encouraged. Then the soul is enlivened; and, being thus restored and enlivened, it is fitted for praise; it has a feeling sense of God's light, love, and favour within, and it must praise. It cannot help it, no more than children can help expressing their joy when pleased and gratified with their parents love and gifts. Who has not found the words of Cowper true?

"Prayer makes the darkened cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw;
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above."

Yes, the believer knows this is true. When faith and love is in lively exercise, the heart is unlocked; when the blessings from above have been received, then comes from the heart, praise. Prayer and praise are so closely connected, that whoever finds himself in the mood for prayer, will soon find himself in the mood for praise. Prayer is God's key to unlock the heart. Prayer unlocked the heart of Hannah, she sought the Lord, obtained the blessing; and she, whose lips only moved in prayer and was not heard by mortal ear, soon moved those lips, and with her mouth, joyfully expressed her praise and thanksgiving loud enough for every one to hear; so joyful was it, that an inspired historian has recorded it for our comfort and instruction. Look at Zacharias, too, when his mouth was unclosed, how soon praise was uttered and his song of praise is also recorded. So was it with the people of Israel. They said—"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream: then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." Hezekiah, too, was, when restored to health, filled with praise. "The living, the living; he shall praise thee, as I do, this day." David, too, how often he spake the praises of God when his heart was set at happy liberty; in one instance (see the 39th Psalm), lest he should sin with his tongue, he resolves to put on the "brank" himself; but in doing so, he exceeded his good intentions. But we see plainly the whole history of the case of a Christian. When obliged to keep silent, how it affects his heart and what result followed? "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence; I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue."

You see, then, from all this, how much prayer has to do with praise. Need I tell you that what begins in prayer on earth ends in praise in heaven. Ah, Christian! think of this; prayer will lead you to praise. Prayer opens the heart; the heart is warmed: a warm heart makes the silent tongue speak. Oh, Christian! cultivate the habit of prayer; avoid sin in every shape and form; be not faithless, but believing. If you feel, at any time, your affections chilled; the praises of God silent upon your tongue, remember David's resource, prayer—"O Lord! open thou my lips." Observe his vehemence and earnestness, as indicated in the very language of his prayer—"O Lord, open thou my lips. Oh! take off this 'brank.' Let me speak freely of thy goodness; let me speak freely of thy love and mercy: it is sin that hath closed and fastened my lips. I am the offender; but now, O Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears."

Is this the language of any of you? If it is, be assured, then, God will soon remove the "brank." If sin has closed your mouth, and you have been before God as an

humble penitent, He will soon open your lips—he will restore peace to you by speaking pardon to your soul—you shall be set at liberty, your tongue shall sing aloud of His righteousness all the day long, and your lips shall greatly rejoice when you sing praises unto Him who has redeemed your precious soul. You will sing praise to the Father for displaying such marvellous and sovereign love in adopting you into His family. You will sing praise to the Son for His unparalleled love in taking your place—suffering instead of you—that He might bring you near to God. You will sing praise to the Spirit for quickening you when dead in trespasses and in sin; for revealing His truth to you; for opening your understanding; for keeping you from the works and ways of the destroyer; and last, but not least, for restoring your soul when fainting in the way, or falling through temptation. May the Lord, in His rich mercy, lead you all to humble, earnest prayer, that he may open your lips to speak His praise.

“And wilt thou in dead silence lie
When Christ stands waiting for Thy prayer?
My soul, thou hast a friend on high;
Arise, and try thine interest there.

“If pain afflict, or wrongs oppress;
If cares distract, or fears dismay;
If guilt deject; if sin distress,
The remedy's before thee—pray!

“'Tis prayer supports the soul that's weak,
Though thought be broken, language lame,
Pray, if thou canst or canst not speak:
But pray with faith in Jesus' name.”—HART.

Sketches and Essays.

THE WORK OF LOVE.

A CHRISTIAN lady sat one morning in her comfortable room, meditating with feelings very much akin to discontent on some of the changes and chances of this mortal life. Her brow was clouded, and her heart oppressed, and though the day's duties were scarcely begun, she felt unequal to what the providence of God clearly appointed, and for doing which the adequate strength is promised to all who ask for it. A new arrangement in her household had thrown more work upon her hands than she expected or liked, and a murmuring spirit was rising within. Several children were preparing their lessons with zeal, in anticipation of a promised visit, during the day, to an indulgent relative. The sun was shining; all around was bright and cheerful; and if she would remember it, light and peace were only waiting until the blind of unbelief should be drawn aside, to beam sweetly into the believer's troubled heart.

A ring at the door-bell announced the postman, and letters were brought in. One was from a distant friend, asking a favour. Could Mrs. H—, without much inconvenience, make personal inquiry concerning the character of a servant who was desiring to enter this friend's household, and had just left a situation in the town near to which Mrs. H— resided? A written character was objectionable, it might be an imposition, and Mrs. H—'s kind assistance would settle the matter satisfactorily.

It was a long distance—her friend had no idea how long; but it must be done, and with a willing heart too, for it afforded real pleasure to be of any use to one who had been loved with true christian love for many years. As that which must be done had better always be done as soon as possible, Mrs. H— resolved to go that day, and reply by return of post. It was convenient that the commission came just when the youthful party could be disposed of comfortably; so they went to pay their visit, and mamma immediately set off on her business expedition. It was curious how every-

The Mother's Magazine. February, 1861.

thing seemed suddenly to have brightened up; the morning cloud had passed away, the little troubles were forgotten, and the pleasure of doing a service to another roused the energies that were failing in her own behalf.

With the aid of two conveyances on different points of a five-miles journey, the street was found at last. It was comparatively new, consisting of rows of neat small houses, with little gardens in front, bow windows, and venetian blinds; and the one of which Mrs. H— was in search had particularly clean steps, and a very bright bell-handle. A pretty little girl, about nine or ten years old, opened the door; and as she showed the visitor into the parlour, a number of little heads disappeared from a corner, and two pairs of legs carried two tiny children as speedily as possible up the stairs, doubtless scared by the intrusion of a stranger. While the little girl went to inform her mother, another child slid from a chair, and escaped also, leaving Mrs. H— at liberty to look about her.

The room was small, and the furniture seemed to have been intended for a larger space. A cottage piano was open, with a child's music-book upon it; the few ornaments on the chimney-piece were handsome; nicely bound books lay on a centre table, and the entire room presented an aspect of comfort and taste; it was evidently not kept for show, but was used as the better sitting-room, possibly it might be called "a drawing room." Mrs. H— was on an errand of observation as well as of inquiry, and she concluded that the servant must know at least how to keep nice furniture in proper order.

Soon a most prepossessing young woman entered, apologising for appearing in dishabille, but reluctant to keep the lady waiting while she dressed. The morning costume was evidently an old print gown, from which all trace of pattern and colour was nearly extinct; but it was clean, and fitted closely round a slight and graceful figure. Her dark hair was braided neatly over the brow; her eyes were soft and gentle; and her countenance one which, without being handsome, was sweet and pleasant to look upon. She was refined and ladylike in manner and speech as well as in appearance, and Mrs. H— was quickly interested, and well pleased to think there was no fear of a false character from this unpretending mistress. She spoke favourably of the servant about whom Mrs. H— came to inquire, and

expressed regret that she had not been able to retain her services, after having taught her almost all that made her valuable; "but," she added, "I cannot blame her for leaving, because she had a great deal to do here; for I only keep one servant."

"But your house does not seem large," said Mrs. H—, "and if she is afraid of work she will not suit my friend."

"Ah! but we are a large family, and the most industrious of servants could not do here without a great deal of help from myself."

"I fear I frightened some of your little ones just now," said Mrs. H—, smiling.

"They are shy, not often seeing strangers; nine of them, and all at home, oblige us to keep very much to ourselves."

"Nine children, and only one servant!" thought Mrs. H—, with a pang of self-reproach for the discontent of the morning.

"And Mary was always up early, especially on washing days, for we do all the washing at home."

"Nine children, only one servant, and washing done at home! Surely I am sent here to learn a profitable lesson," again thought Mrs. H—. "No wonder that delicate face, though still youthful, showed marks of care, and that a slight drooping at the chest denoted physical weakness."

"Excuse me," said Mrs. H—, conscious that her long look of pity and admiration needed some apology, "but I am utterly at a loss to understand your good management."

"Oh! it only needs a little method and a willing mind," she replied, smiling. "We do very well, and I am not at all overwhelmed. Of course there is a great deal to be done to keep so large a family in any comfort; for I need not tell you that our means are small, and we have to be very careful."

"If it would not be impertinent, it would gratify me much to know a little of your plan," said Mrs. H—, with increasing interest.

"Not at all impertinent, if you wish to know so commonplace a thing. We breakfast rather early, that my husband may go to business, and my four elder children to school in good time. Then I help to make beds, and the servant does the rooms while I wash the breakfast things and arrange about dinner. She then takes two or three of the children out—two can go in the little carriage, and one can run by her side, but I dare not trust more of such little

creatures out at once. When they come in I put them to sleep for a while, and she takes the others for a walk. By this time the elder ones come from school, and I attend to them all, while the servant finishes preparing for dinner. After that they go to school again, and I do many little things to make the house comfortable, while baby plays or sleeps, and the little ones run about me and pretend to help sometimes. I give them little lessons, too, when I can, and we sing and talk a great deal, to amuse and keep them from quarrelling. If I can any way spare time, I take them out myself; for they should have plenty of fresh air, and it is not very easy to get it so close to a town."

"And are you not quite worn out by the time your children are in bed?"

"A little sometimes; but then my quieter work and recreation begin. I never make any fuss or bustle after my husband comes home; and we have our tea comfortably while the elder children learn their lessons: then in summer we often take a walk, and in winter he reads to me while I work."

"You cannot have much time for needlework, I think."

"Oh, but I make time, for I do it all myself, excepting that my little girl begins to help now. It is quite a day's work to mend socks for them all."

Mrs. H—'s interest had by this time kindled into warm sympathy and admiration, and she could only wonder at and thank the directing hand which had sent her to learn so useful a lesson. "I am thinking," at last she said, "that you must have had the blessing of admirable home-training to enable you to do all this so contentedly and with such apparent order."

"Ah, no! I wish it had been so, for I should have done better I was a spoilt pet at home, supposed to be too delicate for much work, and I never expected to have any to do; but we cannot prophesy."

"And does your health bear up?"

"It did fail last year, and I was obliged to go away for some weeks; but I was very glad to come home again, though Mary had done wonderfully well without me. I am much better now, and we are all very happy. I am sure it is good for me to have plenty to do."

No doubt it was; and none could look upon the bright, refined countenance of the speaker, and not feel that, whether she knew it or not, to her the promise had been fulfilled, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." No lady, no woman with the least comprehension of what is involved with nine children, only one young servant, a small house, and washing and needlework done at home, will undervalue this beautiful example of what may be done by a resolute will and a contented heart. This lady, for lady she was, and would still be, though reduced to a workhouse, was wisely contented to make the best of the position and the duties in which her lot was cast, without sighing for what could not be, or struggling to make an appearance which her circumstances did not justify. Good common sense was manifestly one of her gifts; but would it always uphold the heart, and sustain the consistency of such a life? Mrs. H— was not left to conjecture, for in the course of further conversation came out the animating motive, "I have a blessing that makes all my duties light, in the kindest and best of husbands, and I should be ungrateful indeed if I did not do my very best to make his home a happy one."

But earthly love should not be all; and the christian visitor could not depart without trying to lead higher. The touch of tenderness seemed to thrill the spiritual nature at once; the tears sprang to her eyes as she replied, "Oh, how I thank you for reminding me of this! I do desire to train up my children in the way they should go, and to do everything because it is the appointment of a wise and gracious God; but I find too little time to think of Him: I am like one receiving the seed 'among thorns.'"

"But as you know your danger, and feel the 'cares of this world' may be the snare by means of which Satan may rob you, after all, of the best reward for which God's servants live and strive, will you not first dedicate to Him the 'body, soul, and spirit' which He has endowed with the power to be what they are to your family on earth, that by His blessing you may prolong your usefulness, and sanctify your influence for their everlasting good?"

"Oh, how I wish I could! but——"

"Let there be no 'but' to hinder the desire, or excuse the duty. Believe me, true religion is not a thing to set us apart from any claim that life may make upon our time and thoughts: it is the best help

to regulate both. It is just doing all with a sympathizing, as well as almighty Friend to stand by us, to strengthen and cheer through a little while of work and trial, and to remind us of the 'rest that remaineth' for His affectionate, industrious children. One little sentence from His holy word may keep your soul alive; one believing prayer may bring an answer of peace; and the pervading spirit of doing 'whatsoever you do unto Him, and in His name,' will make every act an offering of love, and daily life a ministry for Christ."

"Surely He has sent you to speak to me this morning," said the listener, warmly.

"And He sent me to learn from you," was the equally warm reply. "Let us profit, and live more to His praise."

WE DIE DAILY.

WE die daily. Life is but a march to death, a continual progress to the grave. The little infant breathes away its gentle breath, and dies; the merriment of the laughing child ceases, for it bows its head upon its mother's breast, and is not; the young man, rejoicing in his youth, falls also beneath death's resistless hand. Neither does its sharp scythe spare the strong one in the prime of manhood. "The fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever?"

Earth's needed Sabbath shall be at God's appointed time. His angels are only waiting His command to sound their silver trumpets, and usher in earth's grand jubilee. When the six days' work of sanctification is accomplished, then shall the land have rest; when the Canaanites are altogether driven out, then shall the meek receive their promised inheritance; when "Salvation" shall be engraven on the walls of the Holy City, and "Praise" shall gleam from its gates of pearl, then shall the bliss of complete, continued security, be enjoyed; when Christ shall take to Himself His great power, and reign "King of kings and Lord of lords," then shall "prayer be made for Him continually, and daily shall He be praised;" when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, then shall the great name of the Holy Ghost, as Jehovah the Sacrificer, be manifested, and well pleased, the Triune God shall behold His loved, ransomed, and regenerated world at rest, and bless earth's Sabbath-day and hallow it.

TRIAL, A HELP HEAVENWARD.

BY OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, D.D.

TRIAL quickens us in prayer, and so effectually helps us heavenward. The life of God in the soul on earth is a life of communion of the soul with God in heaven. Prayer is nothing less than the Divine nature in fellowship with the Divine, the renewed creature in communion with God. And it would be as impossible for a regenerate soul to live without prayer, as for the natural life to exist without breathing. And oh, what a sacred and precious privilege is this!—is there one to be compared with it? When we have closed the door,—for we speak now of that most solemn and holy habit of prayer, private communion,—and have shut out the world, and the creature, and even the saints, and are closeted in personal, solemn, and confiding audience with God, what words can pourtray the preciousness and solemnity of that hour! Then is guilt confessed, and backslidings deplored, and care unburdened, and sorrow unveiled, and pardon sought, and grace implored, and blessings invoked, in all the filial trustfulness of a child unbosoming itself in the depths of a father's love, pity, and succour. But precious and costly as is this privilege of prayer, we need rousing to its observance. Trial is eminently instrumental of this. God often sends affliction for the accomplishment of this one end—that we might be stirred up to take hold of Him. “Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee, they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them.” To whom in sorrow do we turn, to whom in difficulty do we repair, to whom in want do we fly, but to the Lord? If in prosperity we have “grown fat and kicked,” if when the sun has shone upon us we have walked independently and proudly and distantly, now that affliction has overtaken us we are humbled and prostrate at His feet; retrace our steps, return to God, and find a new impulse given to, and a new power and meetness and soothing in, communion with God. Be assured of this, my reader, there is no help heavenward like unto prayer. There is no ladder the rounds of which will bring you so near to God, there are no wings the plumage of which will waft you so close to heaven, as prayer. The moment you have unpinioned your soul for

communion with God,—let your pressure, your sorrow, your sin be what it may,—that moment your heart has quitted earth, and is on its way heavenward. You are soaring above the region of sorrow and battle and sin, and your spirit is expatiating beneath a purer, happier, sunnier sky. Oh! the soothing, the strengthening, the uplifting found in prayer beneath the cross! Thus trial helps us heavenward by quickening us to devotion, by stirring us up to closeness of walk. Child of God! want you speedier advance heavenward? Seek it in closer converse with God. Oh, what mighty power has prayer! It has controlled the elements of nature, has stopped the sun in its course, has stayed the arm of God! A man mighty in the prayer of faith is clothed with an invincible panoply, is in possession of a force which Omnipotence cannot resist, for he has “power with God, and prevails.” Oh, turn your difficulty into prayer, turn your sorrow into prayer, turn your want into prayer, turn your very sins and backslidings into confession, supplication, and prayer, and on its wing your soul shall rise to a region of thought and feeling and fellowship close to the very gates of heaven. Lord, we thank Thee for the sacred privilege of prayer,—we thank Thee for the mercy-seat, sprinkled with blood, the place of prayer,—we thank Thee for Jesus’ precious name, our only plea in prayer,—we thank Thee for the divine grace of prayer,—and not less, Lord, do we praise Thee for the trial, the suffering, the sorrow which stimulates our languid spirit, and wakes our dormant heart to the holy, earnest exercise of prayer!

Trials are necessary to wean us from the world. Perhaps nothing possesses so detaching, divorcing an effect in the experience of the Christian as affliction. The world is a great snare to the child of God. Its rank is a snare, its possessions are a snare, its honours are a snare, its enterprizes are a snare, the very duties and engagements of daily life are a snare, to a soul whose citizenship is in heaven, and whose heart would fain be more frequently and exclusively where Jesus, its treasure, is. Oh, how the things that are seen veil the things that are not seen!—how do things temporal banish from our thoughts and affections and desires the things that are eternal! Why does the sun appear so small an orb, so minute a speck, to our eye? Simply because of its remote distance. Oh, is it not thus that Christ with His surpassing loveliness, and heaven with its winning attrac-

tions, and eternal things with their profound solemnity, and communion with God in Christ, so soothing and precious, are objects so dim and superficial, just because we, of the earth earthy, live at so great a distance from God, and allow the influence of the world an ascendancy over us so supreme and absorbing? But God in wisdom and mercy sends us trial to detach us from earth, to lessen our worldly-mindedness, more deeply to convince us how empty and insufficient is all created good when His chastening is upon us, to intensify our affection for spiritual things, and to bring our souls nearer to Himself. "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer" (Prov. xxv. 4). "I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin" (Isa. i. 25). Oh, when the heart is chastened and subdued by sorrow, when the soul is smitten and humbled by adversity, when death bereaves, or sickness invades, or resources narrow, or calamity in one of its many crushing forms lights heavily upon us, how solemn, earnest, and distinct is the voice of our ascended Redeemer, "If ye be risen with Me, seek those things which are above where I sit at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth. I am your Treasure, your Portion, your All. Sharers of My resurrection-life, you are partakers of its holy quickening power, and its heaven-bestowing blessings. Soon to be with Me in glory, let your heart travel thitherward, and in its loosening from earth, its divorcements from the creature, cultivate the mind of My holy apostle, who desired to depart and be with Me." Oh, that to this touching appeal our hearts may respond, "Lord whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. Thou hast stricken and wounded and laid me low, but Thou wilt comfort, heal, and raise me up again. Righteous art Thou, O Lord, when I plead with Thee, yet let me talk with Thee of Thy judgments. Let this trial detach me from the world, wean me from my idols, transfer my heart to Thee, and speed my soul with a quicker step heavenward." Thus the heart, crusted by the continuous influence of earthly things, is mellowed by sorrow, through the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost; and then the word becomes more fruitful, and the Lord Jesus growing more precious, and conformity to God more promoted, earth recedes and heaven approaches, and we exclaim, in the words of the Psalmist,

"Before I was afflicted I went astray, : but now have I kept Thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted ; that I may learn Thy statutes." Thus, "afflictions are God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our heavenly rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and on the left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it and turn out at it! When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth sickness or other afflictions reduce us! Every Christian, as well as Luther, can call affliction one of his best schoolmasters ; and with David may say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray : but now I have kept Thy word." Many thousand rescued sinners may cry, "O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrow! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted! Not only the green pastures and still waters, but the rod and staff, they comfort us. Though the word and the Spirit do the main work, yet suffering so unbolts the door of the heart, that the word hath easier entrance."

"THE LORD IS THY KEEPER."

(Psalm cxxi. 5.)

SWEET text for a new year. We know not what foes may arise, what dangers we may meet, or what weaknesses we may feel ; but if the Lord is our keeper, all will be well. Let me afresh commit myself to the Lord, to be kept by Him ; nor myself only, but all that I possess or value : for, if I commit my all to God in simple prayer, and trust in the Lord with all my heart, I shall live in peace, and enjoy all my temporal mercies and spiritual privileges. In the Lord's keeping, I am safe, for He never slumbereth nor sleepeth. In the Lord's keeping, I may be happy ; for He will employ all His perfections for me, and glorify all His Divine attributes in me. If the Lord is my keeper, I shall be holy ; for He will separate me from the world, draw me near to Himself, and employ me in His holy service. Blessed Lord, keep me, and give me a sweet experimental knowledge of Thyself, that I may say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

THE MOTHER COMFORTED.

A DEAR BOY, about six years old, the only son of his mother, and she a widow, died some time ago. The mother thought she had not the explicit assurance on his death-bed that he was really a child of God, and feared that her child might have been lost through her unfaithfulness. In her sorrow of spirit she wrote to a christian friend. The following is the reply. It may be useful to others besides her to whom it was sent:—

“I would, without delay, send you my sympathies, reminding you at the same time of the far deeper, truer sympathies of the Lord Jesus, not merely in your bereavement and sorrow, but in *this special point* which is so afflicting you. He sees it, knows it, and is asking you to receive His sympathy and consolation under it.

“I proceed at once to your difficulty; and, in so doing, I am not getting up something for the occasion, or trying to say something new, in order to comfort you. I am telling you what I have long held, what I have gathered out of the word of God, as well as from years of observation and experience. I do not believe that many of the children of God’s people are lost. That some are, I know, because God has showed us so in the cases of Eli and Samuel; but I am persuaded that these are exceptions.

“The passage which I specially found upon is, 1 Cor. vii. 14. In this, God shows us that He recognises such a oneness between a believing parent and his child, as leads Him to call them saints no less than their parents. On this oneness God acts, not merely in infancy, but for many a year. On it He acts until the children have, by a distinct rejection of Christ, torn themselves from their parents and from Christ. You have no difficulty in believing that He should act on this in the case of a babe; and why should you have any difficulty in believing that He should act on it in one five or six years old? Is original sin such a light thing that God can pass over it in virtue of this oneness, while He refuses to pass by actual sin?

“There is danger of overlooking the awful heinousness, and hatefulfulness of the former, and forgetting that if actual sin can break up this oneness, much more would original sin have prevented such an oneness from ever being formed. Positive rejection of Christ, when the age of personal responsibility has come, must, of course, separate from God; but so tenacious (if I may so write) is God of His

covenant and promise; so fully does He act upon this marvellous oneness between parent and child; so overflowing in His grace; that nothing short of such a rejection can put away the blessing. Again: I do not believe that a believing parent's unfaithfulness can cancel this oneness. This oneness turns simply on the parent being a believer, and on nothing else; else how could it exist at all? I do not deny that a parent's unfaithfulness may in after years be the occasion of a child's destruction; but this is not by breaking up the union, but by leading the child into sin, or, at least, not restraining him, as in Eli's case. Besides, were the blessing made to turn upon our faithfulness, so that any amount of unfaithfulness would hinder it, who then could hope for a blessing to his children? Where upon earth is to be found the faithful parent? Yet this does not encourage us in unfaithfulness.

"As a believing parent, I go to God with my children's sins as well as my own, for they are one with me: do I not get forgiveness for them and for myself? I go to God for light and favour to them as well as to myself: do I not get these things? Yes, surely I do, 'else were my children unclean, but now are they holy.'

"But are not some at least of the children of christians lost? Yes. But let me notice that this has been occasioned by positive and open inconsistency and unfaithfulness in such as actually encouraged the children in sin, or presented an evil example, or did not teach them the way of life. Where these visible inconsistencies do not exist, and where the parent watches over the child prayerfully and believingly, then I am persuaded that the secret shortcomings in duty over which the parent mourns, will not hinder the blessing; else who could look for it?

"I have on various occasions (when I saw the lives of apparently christian parents) been led to make inquiries, and I have almost invariably found one of two things,—either that there was gross mismanagement and open unfaithfulness on the part of the parents, or else that they were not really christians.

"The many secret shortcomings in yourself, over which you mourn, ought not to cast you down, as if God, because of them, would break His covenant. If He did not cast you off on account of them, why should you suppose that He may have cast off your child? And do you think that He stands so much on ceremony in these things,

and is so hard a Master, as to overlook your prayers and tears in time past in your child's behalf, and only remember (what you count) the neglects upon his death-bed—neglects occasioned by sorrow, and fear, and trembling of heart? Is He not the same God who said in the days of His flesh, 'The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak?'

"I have often had to notice, also, the peculiar way in which God gives blessing to the child through the believing mother, even more than through the believing father, as if the woman, who was the introducer of the evil, were to be specially made the channel of the blessing; as if God, in His boundless love, were giving her some compensation for her pangs, and toils, and cares.

"Think, my dear friend, of these things. I write what I have long believed to be the truth of God. It is well fitted to be your consolation in the hour of your bitter grief.

"Cease to brood over your unfaithfulness, as if it were a new thing in the earth—as if it were something so peculiar, that because of it your child might be lost. Have you not carried your unfaithfulness to the Fountain, and had it washed away? Cease, then, to brood over it. Remember only the gracious covenant referred to in the passage with which I began. Keep hold of that, and believe that all that you ever asked for yourself and for your beloved child shall assuredly be given; yea, to him has been given already. Your prayers and tears have been answered by his earlier removal to bliss—that is all!

"I trust you will be able to follow my statements. The subject is one fitted for much more than a hasty letter like this. It is one which involves not merely the consolation of bleeding hearts, but the honour of a covenant-keeping God."

TIME'S GREAT LESSON.

The *past* dost thou muse on,
With mourning and shame?
Past thoughts, words, and actions,
Thou canst not reclaim.

The *present*, momentous,
Is fully thine own;
Improve then each moment,
Before it hath flown.

A *future*, contingent,
Thou canst not secure;

Then hasten, frail mortal,
Thy soul to assure.

'Tis fixed and determined
By wisdom divine,
That point when *no future*
On earth will be thine.

When death shall discover
Thy final abode,
And leave thee for ever
With Satan or God.

SEEK THE LORD WHILE HE MAY BE FOUND.

THIS advice, dear young friends, is the best that can be offered you at the beginning of a New Year. It is advice which, if you follow with all your hearts, will make this a "happy new year," the happiest you have ever known. Do you wish to be happy? Oh, yes! you are ready to say, I do wish to be happy, I do wish to enjoy myself, and to live in comfort and peace. Well then, my dear young friends, listen while I tell you of the nature of that happiness I refer to, tell you how needful it is you should seek after it, and tell you the certainty of your enjoying it, if you seek it with your whole hearts.

It is a great mercy that you are spared to enter a new year. Yes, a great mercy; for had you been cut off by death during the past year, where had your souls been at this moment? Think of this question, you who have not, you who have not yet sought the Lord—not yet sought after the happiness I am talking about. Ah! not on earth; not in the Sabbath school-room, listening to an affectionate teacher; not in the house of God, hearing the glad tidings of mercy; not on praying ground, calling upon God to bless you. Oh, no! but in that world of woe and sorrow, where instruction can never enter, where entreaty and means and hope are for ever ended. In hell would you be, "lifting up your eyes in torment." Ah! my dear young friends, do pray to be made thankful for the sparing goodness of the Lord; pray that His long suffering may become a blessing unto you; and pray for grace to improve the present season of mercy, that you may "Seek the Lord while He may be found."

You have great reason to seek the Lord, for if you do not, you can never be happy; for to be truly happy, you must fear and love God—you must hate sin—pray continually to be taught by the Holy Spirit—love the blessed Bible—delight in the work and service and house of the Lord. Yes, my dear young friends, the fear of the Lord will make you happy; for if you truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, your sins will be forgiven, your heart will be changed, and you will be prepared for death and heaven. In such a favoured

state, the fear of death will be taken away, and you will have a good hope of eternal life and acceptance with God in the judgment. Ah! is not this a blessed state to be in? Is not this happiness worth seeking for? Surely, you will say it is. And it is altogether superior to any thing that this world can give you. Those who live in folly, and gay pursuits and pleasures, may think they are happy, but it is not real happiness. Oh, no! nothing they engage in can take away the fear of death, or give them any hope of happiness in heaven. The wicked are afraid of death; they have no hope of heaven. But in the way I point out to you, this blessed hope may be obtained, and this happiness which is spiritual, lasting, and satisfying. Say then, my dear young friends, is it not worth seeking for? Is it not your wisdom to "Seek the Lord while He may be found?"

Do not forget this subject; do not neglect to make it the subject of your constant and earnest prayer. You are not by nature inclined to seek the Lord. Your hearts are naturally averse to such a duty. "God is not in all your thoughts;" and you have no delight in His word or in His ways. You are as sinners "enemies to God by wicked works," and have no claim or hope of enjoyment in the world to come. No, the certain and hopeless prospect of the unconverted soul is everlasting misery and despair. Peace and happiness will be for ever unknown to those who die in their sins, who do not love the Lord. Surely then there is an awful necessity for you to follow the short, but important, command, "Seek the Lord while he may be found." If you do not, you are without hope, and where God is you can never enter; and all the offers of mercy made to you in the school-room—all the entreaties sounded in your hearing in the house of God—all the prayers of godly parents and friends—all will unite in making your misery the greater, when cast into that darkness which will be your eternal portion. Oh! there is need, my dear young friends, for you to seek the Lord. The worth of your precious never-dying souls loudly calls upon you to do so. The Word of God commands, godly friends entreat, ministers persuade, teachers beseech, and God himself invites you to seek His face—to call upon Him for salvation while he is near. Let me also tell you of the shortness and uncertainty of your lives. Death may come at an hour when you think not: then it will be too late to

pray ; the "door will be shut," and your precious souls lost for ever. Oh, how gloomy is such a prospect ! Oh, that it may never be the portion of one reader of this Magazine ! Oh, that each may now begin to "Seek the Lord while He may be found !"

I have told you, dear youthful readers, of the happiness you will enjoy, if you "seek the Lord while he may be found ;" and I have told you of the necessity there is for you to do so. I will now assure you of the certainty of your finding all I have described, if you seek the Lord with your whole hearts. Yes, the promise is sure, that "they who seek shall find." The Lord Jesus will receive you ; he has died to save sinners, and declares, "him that cometh I will in no wise cast out." The Holy Spirit is promised to all who ask it ; and it is said, "A new heart will I give you, and a right spirit I will put within you ;" "I love them that love me, and those who seek me early shall find me."

Dear readers, there is no room for fear ; for you shall never perish if you come to Christ, and "Seek the Lord while He may be found."

JOHN XI. 35.

"Jesus wept ! These tears are over,
But His heart is still the same ;
Kinsman, Friend, and Elder Brother
Is His everlasting name.
Saviour, who can love like Thee,
Gracious One of Bethany ?

"When the pangs of trial seize us,
When the waves of sorrow roll,
I will lay my head on Jesus,
Pillow of the troubled soul.
Surely none can feel like Thee,
Weeping One of Bethany !

"Jesus wept ! And still in glory
He can mark each mourner's tear ;
Loving to retrace the story
Of the hearts He solaced here.
Lord, when I am called to die,
Let me think of Bethany.

"Jesus wept ! That tear of sorrow
Is a legacy of love ;
Yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
He the same doth ever prove.
Thou art all in all to me,
Living one of Bethany."

Heb. xiii. 8.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE RULE OF JUDGMENT.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 20TH, 1861,
BY THE HON. AND REV. B. W. NOEL, M.A.,
AT JOHN STREET CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW.

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."—Acts xvii. 30, 31.

THE expression to which alone I wish to direct your attention to-day in this passage, is this—"He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." The judgment which Jesus will pronounce in the day of judgment on the world, will be a righteous judgment. All through the Book of God, he announces his own righteousness. He commissioned his servants to celebrate his righteousness. His rule is righteous; his redemption is righteous; the salvation he gives to his people is righteous; and the judgment will be righteous too. And he who is appointed to be the judge on his Father's throne, is said to be the righteous judge; and it is because he loves righteousness and hates iniquity, that, therefore, he, in human nature, has been exalted to the throne of the universe. And that is one peculiar feature of his character. He is a righteous being, and therefore is a righteous judge. Hence it is said, he will judge the world in righteousness, according to his own nature, and as the anointed judge from God must necessarily do, or God would be dishonoured.

Now, to judge the world in righteousness, includes three statements. It shows that he will review and judge our whole conduct, otherwise he would not be a righteous judge; secondly, that he will judge us by a righteous law; and, thirdly, that he will apply that law to every case righteously, and that his judgment of every individual person will be a righteous judgment. That is what God has revealed. He will judge our whole conduct; he will judge us by a righteous law, and apply that righteous law, in all its parts, to us righteously: We are not left to *infer*, from the mere fact of his being the righteous judge, that he will judge our whole conduct. It is revealed. It would not be a right judgment upon us, if it were not a judgment upon our whole conduct. When any man comes into an English court of justice—the administration of justice is remarkably pure in this country—he sees that one of the advantages of our administration of justice is, that extraneous points are excluded, and everything goes to fasten attention upon the point at issue between the litigating parties, so that nothing else may be brought into court, except that one point they are contending about, without which, there would be no end to the proceedings. Now, the effect of this is, that while the judgment may be perfectly righteous with reference to that particular point, yet, as many things in reference to the conduct of the persons are excluded from view, the sentence may be regarded as either too lenient or too severe, as other circumstances, which either exaggerate it

The Mother's Magazine.—Feb. 1861.

or mitigate it, come into view. Here will be no such case, because all our conduct will be reviewed.

In the first place, the Lord Jesus will judge our acts. All through the New Testament, you observe, it says, what we do will be judged. Jesus will reward every man according to his works. This is repeated often in the New Testament. You and I shall be judged according to our works; and that is no pleasant anticipation for us, if we are to stand on mere justice. But consider what a single habit of evil implies. There is not an unconverted man here, that has not a habit of evil—perhaps many. And what the apostle James says of a habit of evil is very fearful to a man who is coming to judgment—"He that shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." He is guilty of violating and trampling under feet, the whole code of God's law. "He that keeps the whole law, and yet offends in one point." Now, I am persuaded there is not a single unconverted man here that does it; not one. There never was, on this earth. And yet that, says James, is trampling on the whole code. Man, always disposed to be self-complacent and self-justified, is disposed, at first, to deny it, but a little consideration silences all cavilling. It is obviously true; for consider what there is in a single habit of sin. It may be illustrated in a few words. Paul says of the will and law of God—"Know ye not that unrighteousness shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Well, there is the law of God. Now, suppose a man says—"I will be honorable, upright; I will do many things that God has ordered, but such a law I will not keep; such a law mentioned here I don't mean to obey; I mean to live in that one sin; I will keep all the other commandments, but such a sin I will not give up;" has that man the least trust in God for his happiness? Has he the least fear of God's wrath? Has that man the least respect for God's authority? Has that man the least gratitude to God for his mercies? Has that man the least love to God for his holy character? And, as the habit runs through the whole of that man's life—as he means always to do it when the occasion serves—therefore, all this want of proper feeling towards God runs through all his life, and forms his whole character. Now, that is obvious to any man who will consider his own mind. A man who is indulging a habit of sin, knows it by his own consciousness. He determines to rebel against God. He does not care for his fear; he defies his authority; he has no gratitude for his mercies; he has no love for his perfections; he is a godless being—that one habit shows it. There is no denying it; it is quite plain. Well, he is perhaps a proud pharisee, and thinks he is very righteous; one habit shows him to be a godless being. But what if that habit is multiplied again and again, till he can count up twenty such habits? What sort of a man is that, and what judgment, if he is to be judged according to his works, must he expect? Or, take another instance, which is equally as plain, as it is also from an inspired apostle. The apostle John says—"He that committeth sin, committeth lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness—*ἀνομία*. The apostle here is not speaking of a habit but an act. What he means is, that if a man wilfully determines to violate any one of the laws of God on any one occasion, that man is a lawless man. He does not merely break the law, that is very plain; but what John says is this—he disputes the law, tramples on the law. He would abolish the law if he could. Let any one reflect for two minutes, and he must see it to be true. Let me remind you of the instance of Pharaoh. God sent to Pharaoh to say he must let Israel go, and he would not. He disbelieved the message. He knew it was the God of Israel that sent it, but he did not intend to obey; and he said, "Who is Jehovah, that I should let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go." Was that man lawless towards God or not? When that man said, "I will not obey Jehovah,"

had he any respect to Jehovah's laws? and if any one of you, my hearers, should say, "God bids me do this, but I cannot do it; I will not do it; I never shall do it," then is not that man self-condemned of lawlessness, of contempt of God's law, as much as if he were breaking all the commandments every day. Now, we have committed many sins; we have been lawless enough; and for all this we must be judged. You and I have forgotten them, thousands of them, but God has not forgotten one; and he is going to judge us according to all these dead and buried works of ours. He is going to bring them all up face to face with us. They will stand up a great army in the judgment day, to bear witness against us. All those transactions that we have forgotten long, and put into the deep, deep grave, or thrown into the ocean of oblivion, he will bring them all out, and we shall be judged according to our works. Will you like that, my unconverted brethren? Will you like these to be set before you, as they certainly will? He will judge us righteously, and therefore according to our works. But these works, bad as they are, and utterly incapable as we are of meeting them—and not one of us is capable of meeting them, not the merest child—bad as they are, this is a very small part of the materials of the judgment which will await us. We have spoken many words; they seem only a breath of air, and lost in a minute; but every word that we have ever uttered, has had a moral character about it, and not one of these words is dead before God. All the thousands of words, sinner, that you have uttered, they will, every one of them, live in the memory of Jesus, and they will all be judged at the last day. Do you think it is very hard and severe that your words should be judged? Why do you think so? Are words trifles? You may say so; but have you thought about it? Can you, with sincerity, say that words are trifles? Whence do these words come? Jesus has said most truly, and your heart consents to it—"Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Therefore, the words are the index of the heart; they just tell us what our character is, and very condemnatory indexes they sometimes are. Think for a moment what words express—what concentrated wickedness there has been in words—before you apply this rule to your own life. What awful wickedness there has been in words. When that old serpent, the devil—who will no more escape judgment than a poor, feeble sinner of earth will—when he came creeping to the ear of Eve, whispering, "Thou shalt not surely die," what devilish malice there was in that. What a dreadful curse followed from it. And yet his were words—mere words. But what an intensity of malice there was against God and man, when he came to unsuspecting Eve's ear, and dropped his words, "Thou shalt not surely die." That was the devil's first lie; and I believe he has whispered in the ear of everyone in this assembly, hundreds of times, just what he did to Eve. He has come to you when you are going to sin, and said, "Thou shalt not surely die." And how many has he dragged down to perdition, by inducing them to believe that words are trifling. Were those words of little wickedness, which the treacherous disciple Judas brought to his lips, when at the head of the murderous band, with their lanterns, and staves, and swords, he came up to Jesus, standing close to the garden of Gethsemane, and said, "Hail, Master?" Was there little wickedness in those simple words? Courteous words, benevolent words were they—was there much wickedness in them? Ought Judas to be condemned for saying, "Hail, Master?" But what horrible ingratitude, what consummation of hypocrisy that man showed when he came up to the garden of Gethsemane, and, unmoved by all the agony he knew Jesus had been going through, and in the face of his brethren in faith, he said, "Hail, Master!" having previously said, "That same man seize, and hold him fast." Are those words without wickedness? Do you think there was little wickedness in that Sanhedrim appointed to administer law, and protect innocence, and greet the good

with respect, when the Sadducean head of it said, "What think ye?" and then they answered, "He is worthy of death; he has committed a crime worthy of death;" and said so of the Son of God to his face? Was there no guilt in that? And was there no guilt in the answering of the people around the cross of Jesus, "Crucify him, crucify him," by which they over-awed the cowardly governor who sent an innocent man to death; and then, as they stood around the cross, cried, "Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him?" You condemn those wicked men, and many like them, my unconverted hearer, but have you no words of your own that you will be sorry to have brought before you when you stand before your judge—no lying words; no filthy words; no malicious words; no words of evil speaking; no tempting words; no cutting words; no contemptuous words; no proud words; and all the other wickednesses of the heart which have been expressed in your words? Will you like to suspend your eternity upon the judgment of your words? Is there one man among us that would venture to say, "Give me, O God, heaven or hell, according to my words?" Well, they will all come out. You have forgotten them; Jesus has not. Everyone of these words will come out, and will form materials for your judgment, as sure as you and I exist. And this is not all. Actions and words are a terrible army of accusers, that will throng around you at that day. But the judgment of the Supreme Judge will go much further than that. Human laws must end with the words. Actions may be judged—human laws can investigate them; words can be judged—human laws can investigate them; but there human laws must stop. The thought is free. The thought of the most persecuted slave in South Carolina or Cuba is free—free as air. No man can chain him for his thoughts, or flog him for his thoughts. But our judge searcheth the thoughts. Our thoughts are every day determining our future judgment. There may be those who say, "This is too severe. Will my thoughts determine what I shall be at the last? This is too severe." Now observe, that thoughts may be injected into the mind by the great enemy of souls, or forced into the mind by circumstances, while we are guiltless. Very bad thoughts, one after another, were forced into the mind of Jesus, by the great enemy at his side, when he was forty days tempted of the devil in the wilderness, but his holy heart never contracted the least taint of sin. Not one lodged there; not one was welcomed there; not one left the least effect behind, but that of signal victory. So, thoughts dropped into the mind, the fiery darts of the enemy, may leave us as they find us, guiltless. But if the evil thoughts originate with ourselves, or if when dropped into the mind they find a welcome there then they become sins, and defile us, as actions and as habits do. "Evil thoughts," says Jesus, "defile the man." God knows what the thoughts are, and the thought begets the action. The thought leads to the wish, and the wish, where there is opportunity, leads to the action. Therefore, thoughts have been the originators of many of the evil actions. Do you suppose there was no evil in the thought of Cain, when it first darted into his mind—"I will murder that brother of mine; I cannot bear him; I'll murder him." There was the murderous thought, not yet brought into life and action, but it was to become the parent of action. When the brothers of Joseph saw their innocent, pious, beloved brother—beloved so by his father for his virtues—coming to them, they said, "The dreamer cometh, let us kill him." The thought was in their mind first, before it got into words, and the words before it reached to an action; but the thought led to the selling of their brother as a slave. Was there no evil in that?

And now, my unconverted hearer, how many thoughts have you indulged—how many thoughts have lodged in your mind, and been welcomed there—there found a nest to repose in? You have welcomed them and said, "It signifieth little what I think, if I act rightly." It signifies everything what you think. The Apostle James has told us the progress of evil thought when he says—"God is not tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." It is his own lustful thought that tempts him; then those thoughts are evil as leading to his sin and his death. "Then, when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." Jesus has told us just the same thing, when he, explaining and enforcing the law of Moses, said—"It was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Do you, sinner, say thoughts are of no avail? Jesus says otherwise. Thoughts are the beginning of actions, and if they are not checked by some restraining circumstances, will issue in direct violation of God's law. Now, all our thoughts dwell with God our judge, and will one day come out at the judgment seat, exhibiting the human heart in its proper phase.

But if thoughts are condemned, so are affections. Much of true religion consists in right affections. Much of the rebellion we are guilty of against God consists in

vicious affections. How many persons go smiling by through life because their outward conduct is so fair. So did the Pharisees. Thought to be the most sacred persons in the nation, the very priests wished to be Pharisees that they might be more sacred. They might not touch the common people, these Pharisees. They were called Pharisees because they were so separate from the common crowd. Many of their sins might be in act and habit, but their chief sin was the sin of their hearts, and it was that which Jesus especially detected. He detected their characters because they were whited sepulchres. They were adorned with gold and ornaments outside, and looked so fair that persons would come to visit the beautiful sepulchres, but then what was their inside full of?—"Dead men's bones, and all uncleanness." Jesus compared the human heart, the heart of these Pharisees, to a sepulchre, full of the most hideous rottenness inside, while it was beautiful outside. Now, at the judgment day this sepulchre will be opened. The outside will be taken off and nothing but the rottenness within will be brought out to show what the human heart was. God has said a terrible thing about the human heart—"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" Now, we know many things of the human heart. You have seen abominable cruelties perpetrated by the human heart—wives, children, parents, friends, murdered for the sake of money. That has come out of the heart. It is the heart, says Jesus, that produces all the wicked things that defile a man. They all come out of the heart. All these things that you can see and understand, come out of the heart and defile a man. It is the heart that produces evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man. But God says, in the passage I have referred to, that "the heart is desperately wicked, who can know it?" We have seen awful things done by the human heart; we have had the dungeons of the Inquisition opened, and have witnessed the best men on the earth tortured—aye, and women too—with all the ingenuity of malice. That comes out of the human heart. We have heard the cry of the poor slave going up to God from the Southern States of America, and calling down vengeance on that land every day. That abomination has come out of the human heart. Any one who has read the history of the first French Revolution has read till he was sick of the horrors which were suggested and prompted by the human heart. Look at what such a wretch as Nana Sahib could do just out of the abundance of his heart. But when you have looked at all these crimes—gathered them all together till you have been ashamed of human nature—God says, "Who can know it?" Who can say what the human heart yet could do. It has thought unnumbered wicked things, but it has not thought its worst. Who can tell what more it could do? Now, we might boast ourselves and say, "Our hearts are not like this." Then do you suppose Solomon's statement has failed to be true in our day—"As in water face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man." I believe our hearts are just like the hearts of these slaveholders and murderers; I believe we have just the same hearts. We are restrained, we have been restrained by circumstances, just as you may go into a menagerie and may see the tiger behind his bars and not be afraid; a little growl is all you hear, and yet it is a tiger still, it has a tiger's heart. So, strong bars may have kept you and me from wickedness, but we have the tiger's heart yet. This wicked heart, this unexplored wicked heart we have yet; unexplored by any save God, and God says of your heart and mine—"It is desperately wicked, who can know it?" God knows it, and our judge knows it. "They shall know," says Jesus, and he says it to all who despise him, "They shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart." "They think I am a man of clay; a poor man that will never appear against them again; they shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart." Now, before that heart-searching judge who looks at the heart, and who declares that many things that appear fair to men are abominations in the sight of God, just because the heart is so evil—before that judge we shall all bow. Which of us will like to have our heart brought out before the judgment day, to have the whited sepulchre thrown open, and all the rottenness disclosed? Who will like it? But we must all be there; not one of us can escape. It will happen to every one here—man, woman, and child—beyond all question, that he will judge the secrets of our heart as well as all other things; and whether our evil has been public or secret—whether we have kept it closely from human eyes, or whether it has stood out in brazen impudence before the world—in either case he saw it, and will judge it, and he will judge the secrets of man in that day when he appears.

And suppose all this were done away with? Sometimes infidel thinkers and infidel talkers and infidel writers say that the human heart in infancy is like a white sheet of paper with nothing upon it, and you may write on it what you please, and that afterwards, as people proceed, you will perceive things written upon it, some good and some bad. But nothing can be more utterly false, as facts every day show. The Word of God

contradicts it, and facts do too. But were it all true—were the heart of infancy as a sheet of paper on which nothing is written, that alone is enough to condemn us to eternal misery. Take it to be true, and what then? The command is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart"—a blank sheet, on which there is no love. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord"—a blank sheet, on which there is no holiness, nothing that there ought to be there. God made you and me in his own image, and there is no image there. It has all vanished; everything is lost, except a creature in which there is no faith, no hope, no love, no gratitude, no holiness, no spirituality, nothing that there ought to be. The first great command is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." That is the first command God has given. Neglect that, and you neglect your chief duty for which you exist. Neglect that, and you are heaping sin on sin every day. And we shall be judged because we do not love God—because we are dead in sins, because we are children of the world. Therefore says Jesus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. He may be a white sheet of paper, destitute of all that is good, but unless he is made good by Almighty grace—unless God writes upon him his new name and nature, and makes him a regenerate soul—there is no possibility of his passing the gate of heaven, or clearing himself at the great day.

And so, brethren, we are told that God will judge the world in righteousness, because he will then review our whole conduct. Let us add he will try us by a righteous law. He will bring this whole congregation under review according to a most righteous law—not to instruct himself, because he is righteous and he framed the law, and the law receives its authority from him. He is righteous, and his will is righteous; and if he did not regard the law at all, he would pass a righteous sentence upon every one. But he has given us the law in order that we might be guided to know our duty, and that he might bring us to the test of this law at the judgment-seat. The law of God, which some people so complacently say is passed away—the moral law—is just as binding upon every Christian—yea, upon every man, I should say—as ever. Every man who has the opportunity of knowing it, is bound by that law. The great promise of the new covenant under which we live is, "I will write this law on their heart." So far from being abrogated, Jesus says, "Not a jot or a tittle shall pass away from the law till all be fulfilled." The Apostle Paul says, "I am under the law to Christ"—bound to obey it, and must give account of my obedience to that holy law. And this is the glory of the gospel—oh! that every one here might experience it—that what the law could not do, because it was weak through our proneness to sin, that Jesus, condemning sin in the flesh, might do by his Spirit, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. He brings us to obey that holy law by which every man will be judged; and then as the law of God in the old covenant is not the ceremonial law, which was adopted for a special exigency, and must necessarily pass away—the moral laws of God are as eternal as himself, and must be, as the expression of his eternal nature—so Jesus has added his own law. "We are his disciples, if we keep his commandments." "Ye are my friends, if ye do what I command you: Go and convert all nations, baptizing them when converted; teach them when baptized, and obey all things whatsoever I have commanded you." So that you see men are placed under the law of Jesus, and must obey the laws of Jesus according to his will.

Now at the last judgment our actions, our words, our thoughts, our affections, our omissions, will be all brought to the test of this law in all its luminous enactments. It will then be tried how far we have kept that holy law in all its particulars. An awful prospect this for us, and not the less awful to some here because they have so little searched it, because that very neglect of study is condemned. The very carelessness, whether a man should know his Maker's will or not, is condemned—the very heedlessness, the very neglect of what Jesus has said to guide our lives, is condemned over and over again—so that the ignorant will not escape; and if a man denies it boldly, and says, "I do not care for the word of Jesus—I shall never stand before him to give an account to him—then hearken to what Jesus has said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words"—men may do it if they please, glorying in disbelief—"he that receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him; the words that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day." These words will judge—this holy law will try a man—"for I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who sent me, he gave me the commandment, what I should say and what I should speak." Now a man may place his whole hope for eternity upon proving Jesus to be a liar, but I hope every one in this chapel will place his hope on a very different footing. If a man does not believe the words of Jesus, then the Lord will judge him, first, because they were such words that he might know to be from God, and secondly, because these words, coming from God, must be the rule of a man's life: and therefore let a man deny it against all evidence, and listen to his treacherous heart rather

than attend to these words—let a man do that, and then this law will come out in all its majesty on that great day, when the giver of that law will appear on his great white throne, and summon him to that man who judgeth the world.

The only remaining point—on which I must be very brief, as I perceive our time is going—is that this law, itself perfect, will be perfectly applied by our judge. We shall each stand before him, as now a criminal stands before a British judge, and the judge has his whole attention to his case. The Lord Jesus will be such a judge to each of us. All the millions that have ever lived will occasion him no embarrassment at that day, and he will judge each of them with a most perfect and exact knowledge of the facts and knowledge of the law. There will be no mistake from his ignorance of the law; and none from his ignorance of the facts. He knows both perfectly; he knows you and me completely; and he knows every law that he has given for our guidance, and thus will judge us at that day. He will commit no injustice. Let no man fear that he will have an unjust decision. There will be no injustice done on that day. If a man can claim exemption from punishment, he shall have it. The Lord is a righteous judge. There is not a sinner on earth that will be able to say on that day, “I have been judged unrighteously.” You need fear no excess of punishment—not the smallest iota beyond what you merit. Unrighteous judgments are sometimes made from malice and revenge—judges have not been ashamed to show the emotion of hatred as they sat on the bench. There will be no injustice from passion on the part of our Lord. We not only know it from his serene majesty—we not only know it from his inexhaustible goodness—but facts have shown it to us. If ever revenge or malice *could* have influenced the heart of Jesus, it was when all the facts of his crucifixion were just recent—when he was looking back on that horrible scene where God’s own message had been abhorred and despised by the race. But what did Jesus when he had just risen from the grave? What did he say? Go and preach the glad tidings of a free and full salvation to every creature; and, when you preach to every creature, begin at Jerusalem. Go to that Sanhedrim; go to Annas; to Caiaphas; go to Herod; go to Pilate—and tell them all there is a free and full salvation, and that no man who comes to me shall be cast out. Well, there was no revenge then, and there will be no revenge, no malice, when the Lord comes again to judge the world in righteousness. Don’t fear any injustice from passion; he is incapable of it. Nor will there be the least injustice at that day from partiality. How should there be partiality? All will be on a dead level—a complete level then. Potentates and paupers, princes and peasants will be all absolutely one. All honours will have ceased; all estates will be gone; every man will be on a perfect level then. There will be no partiality, such as there has been, and is to this day, in places where the administration of justice is not pure between man and man, class and class. There is no respect of persons with Jesus. He is too high and too great. He will overlook no one because he is poor, and he will not flatter or extenuate the faults of any man because he is rich. There will be no injustice committed that day from cupidity. How many an earthly judge has had his hands stained with bribes; how many a one has asked what he shall gain by such or such a judgment; not in our country—God has freed us from that great scourge—but it *has* been so even in our country, and is still so in some countries now—but no cupidity will influence our judge! Cupidity! What does he desire? He has countless millions before him utterly destitute, and he is there to distribute honours, dignities, and estates to all whom he will. How could you bribe him, rich and great man, when you stand before him utterly feeble and destitute, waiting, as Lazarus did, for the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table. Will there be but one crumb on that day for you? Ah! you will look on that day, if perchance you may get even one. And, more than all, there will be no injustice committed that day from fear. When we all stand before our judge, let no man hope that the number of the guilty will form any barrier to their just condemnation. Jesus will have no more terror at the countless millions of his enemies around his throne of judgment on that day than the mower has terror at the blades of grass in the field that fall beneath his scythe; nor will men any more have the power of resisting his sentence or resenting it than the blades of grass of the field have to resent the action of the mower. There will then be nothing to disturb his sentence; he is incapable of influence by anything from within. Holy and loving is God, and his judgment will proceed in all righteousness, in all wisdom, in all benignity, and it will be to all of us wise, and righteous, and benevolent.

Observe this, my hearers: if you are unconverted there will be no appeal from that day. It is the highest court in the universe. There will be no revision of the sentence there. The sentence is perfectly enlightened, wise, just, and good. You can make no remonstrance; all your remonstrance will burn your own lips when you utter it, and come back like fear upon your own consciences. The perfection of justice is such, that prayer will be unavailing. To ask him to modify it in the least

is to ask him to be unjust and unwise. It will be all just as he reviews it for eternity; and when that sentence is pronounced he has nothing to do but to say it shall be, and it is done. There will be no reasons given there. Millions will find his sentence self-executed. He will have millions of angels to do his bidding; he will not need one of them. His sentences will be self-executed. You will be through eternity what Jesus says you shall be.

And now, dear friends, are you ready for that judgment—you that are unconverted, are you ready for it? Your Judge, who is present now, knows you well; he marks all you do; he is writing down your thoughts to-day. I say, are you ready to stand before him to answer for those actions, words, thoughts, affections, omissions, all so corrupt, all so deserving perdition? Ask your own consciences, and say, "Are you ready?" If you were to hear the thunder of the archangel's trumpet, and witness this very day the Saviour coming to judgment, are you ready? If not, then, take a friendly counsel. I give you the counsel of the apostle James; it is the best you will have. Take it—take it to-day; take it in God's name. Submit yourselves to God. That is what every unconverted person here has to do. Submit yourself to God, I say, in the name of God. Whatever your past history, submit yourself to him this instant. Submit to his righteous sentence when he says, "Every one under the law is under the curse." Do not argue it. Submit yourself to God and to his righteous law and sentence. The Jews would not, because they were working out a wretched righteousness of their own, which was their ruin. Submit yourself to the righteousness of God. There is a righteousness for you yet—God has wrought it out; submit yourself humbly enough to accept it as a free gift. When you come to Jesus to be saved—as come you must, if you are saved—put yourself in his hands; submit yourselves to take his yoke. Many will not do this, or are afraid to do it, or think that they must have their own way. My hearer, submit yourself to Jesus Christ to-day; take his yoke to-day, receive his burden, and you will find rest to your soul. Now you have nothing to do but this—submit yourself to God. Go from this chapel to submit to his righteous cause, to the righteousness he has pointed out to you, and to the yoke of Jesus that his disciples must wear, and then you are safe.

But you that are in Christ, what a blessing it is to know that when this awful judgment comes, and, as Paul says, every one of us shall give account of himself to God—every one of us—of all those actions, words, thoughts, affections, and omissions, which are all damning to us, we shall have to give account of them all to Jesus. Yes; he knows them already. Oh! what a comfort to know that when that account is given, and we confess that our portion is hell, and we deserve it—just as the poor, trembling criminal that died without faith and wakes up without hope—oh! what a comfort to think of his words: "He that believeth on him is not condemned." Master, I do believe; I have nothing to plead; I am a ruined sinner; thou saidst, "He that believeth on him is not condemned; he that heareth my words, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." Jesus, my Judge, thou didst say it, and I believe it. Thou didst say I should never come into condemnation. Oh! blessed assurance from him who is so just—from him who is so true. Go and tell the good news to every creature. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." Master, I do believe; I do believe, and thou saidst I should be saved, and therefore I must be saved. "There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." Only be in Christ, and you can bear this searching judgment. Only be in Christ, and actions, words, thoughts, affections, omissions, the whole detail of damning evils, shall be brought out before the universe, and we shall prove God for a Saviour, and our righteousness shall be better than the angels. We shall fear nothing on that day, but only see in our Judge the glory of our Saviour—the glory of him who has raised us from the guilt and saved us from the power of sin. Let us hold fast our confession in Jesus; and if others choose to excuse themselves by extenuating their crimes and destroying the authority of God's law—questioning the power of Jesus to save—let us hold fast our confidence. Friends, let Christ be your only trust; let him be your first trust. Trust him with perfect confidence; and on that day in the which he shall judge the world in righteousness you will share in his triumph and in the triumph of his Church.

Sketches and Essays.

THE RUBS OF LIFE.*

"Oh, what a cruel world this is," said old Mr. Kindheart, as he came in from driving away a set of mischievous boys from teasing a poor donkey; "one would think some folks were born without feelings. I only wish all the rubs of life were as easily settled; but many a poor thing bears a stroke from one and a poke from another, till a higher Power gives release. Oh, wife, you and I know that it's the little things that make the trials of life."

Mrs. Kindheart—Ay, ay, so it is; to be fourscore years, and to be a trouble to every one, that's something; and to feel one's in the way, and to be told that the workhouse is the place for folk who are past work, is another rub; and did you hear to-day what a neighbour said about our Jenny's baby?

Mr. Kindheart—No, what was it, wife?

Mrs. Kindheart—Poor little thing, it was crying, and the woman said, "It's just like its grandmother, for it has such a long face, it looks as if it had brought trouble with it." Jenny was too full to speak at first, and so was I; at last she kissed it, and said—"It's brought love with it, and if it lives to grow like its grandmother, it will have brought a blessing too."

Mr. Kindheart—Well, wife, that was a nice way of smoothing things; what a world this would be without the rubs!

"Indeed it would," said the clergyman, who just came up to the cottage; the door being open, he heard the last remark.

Mr. Faithful—A world without rubs, my friends, would be a world without sin, a world without trouble; and as we cannot expect to find it so, let us learn how to meet trouble, for sooner or later it will come to everyone, as the Holy Bible tells us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." St. John xvi. 33.

* Published by Wertheim, Macintosh and Hunt.

The Mother's Magazine, March. 1861.

Mrs. Kindheart—Ah, yes, Sir, and when real tribulation comes, then I can pray and get strength from God for it ; but its the little bits of things, that you would'nt think were worth calling a trouble, that are such rubs.

Mr. Faithful—Well, take your rubs to the Lord God, and ask Him to smooth them.

Mrs. Kindheart—Yes, Sir, I can do that, and I often think it would be a help if I could pray first, but you see they come so sudden, that I havn't a chance. This morning I was reading my Bible, and the door opened. I looked up, and said, "Oh, is that you, neighbour! you lifted the latch as soft as Mrs. Faithful." "Indeed," she answered; "so you thought you'd have your Bible out, and then she'd think you were so good:" you can't believe, Sir, how hurt I was.

Mr. Faithful—I understand what you mean; you're not the only one, my friend, who feels the rubs of life. Some in every station, high and low, rich and poor, have been polished by these very rubs, which seem so trying.

Mrs. Kindheart—Polished! what can you mean, Sir?

Mr. Faithful—I will try and explain. When I was a boy, I picked up some rough stones on the sea-shore; my mother saw them, and said that some of them appeared to be valuable, and she took me to a clever man, called a lapidary, who understood the art of polishing stones. I emptied my pockets before him; he took up one stone after another, and knocked it with a hammer, and as each crumbled in his hand, he said, "Nothing but granite, Ma'am." At last, one very dull, ugly stone, appeared too hard to break: "This one," said he, is worth them all, it would take a polish." My mother, wishing me to see the process, gave the man the order, and I watched him set to work. I shall never forget my astonishment as I saw the strong pressure that was requisite before there was the least improvement, and how time obliged us to leave before the polishing was completed. When the stone was sent home, polished on one side as bright as a looking-glass, my mother pointed out to me the difference between that and the side which had been left rough and unpolished, just as I had found it. The lesson she then taught me from it I have never forgotten, and I think, my friends, you will agree with me that it was worth remembering: it so exactly applies to the subject upon which we were speaking, that if you like I will tell it to you.

Mr. and Mrs. Kindheart—Oh! do, Sir, if you please.

Mr. Faithful—My mother taught me that the stones were a picture of ourselves: we are all stones, some hard, some soft; and all those that are to shine as gems in our Saviour's crown must be polished here on earth. Would we be one of the jewels to form "a crown of glory, and a royal diadem in the hand of our God," as we read in Isa. lxii. 3, we must submit to the polishing. There are sharp corners that need rubbing off, and rough sides that need smoothing: all this may be accomplished by the daily rubs of life. Just as the stones get rounded on the sea shore, by the action of the waves, and the knocking of one against another, so our sharp sayings, our self-esteem, our self-love, get rubbed off and smoothed down by our daily intercourse with others; and as, now and then, with the stones of the beach, one is selected from the many, to be specially polished, so it is with the world. Would we see the beautiful meekness of Moses; he must be called from his home to be tried in the wilderness. Would we be dazzled with the humility of St. Paul; he must be cut and chiselled till he can say, "The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Would we be attracted by David's holiness, and read of him as the man after God's own heart; he must first cry out as he feels bitter suffering, "Day and night Thy hand is heavy upon me;" and so, my dear friends, all God's children are put, as it were, on the lathe to be polished. The hard, unsightly stone, that we think worth nothing, the lapidary selects as one likely to receive a high polish; and many a character that we think unprepossessing, is viewed by the great Creator of all as having many virtues which only need the trials and afflictions of life to bring them into action. We know that it is for this purpose that our trials are sent, even to smooth our rough, sharp, selfish natures; shall we not, therefore, be ready to submit to the polishing?

Mrs. Kindheart—Oh, yes, Sir, if we could only feel the trials were having this end; but I don't seem to be any the better for them.

Mr. Faithful—It is not every stone that is better for the pains of the workman; after taking great trouble, he has often to throw it down and say, "It's no use, it won't take a polish; there's a deeper flaw, and I can make nothing of it." And so it is with some whom God chastens. Look at Pharaoh. God tried ten times with him,

but Pharaoh refused to be corrected; he hardened his heart. Read Amos iv., and you will see how many times the Lord afflicted His people, and He appeals to them in these words, "Yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord." Oh, let not one of the strokes which we receive from our Heavenly Father be without use to us. He tells us they are to "teach us to profit," and they are to conform us more to the likeness of our Lord and Saviour; they are to make us "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints." Col. i. 12.

Mrs. Kindheart—Yes, Sir, I believe real afflictions are often made to work for our good, but I cannot see how the little rubs of life can be of any use.

Mr. Faithful—He who numbers the hairs of our heads calls nothing little. He who watches the fall of a sparrow permits every rub, and knows the exact trial needful for us. He who on earth bore the cruel taunts of his persecutors feels for us, and says, "Take up your cross daily, and follow me." Let us bear each for Him, hour by hour, and minute by minute; and when we feel it press too heavily, even though it may not appear to do so to earthly friends, let us look above and say, "Pitifully behold the sorrows of our heart; turn from us all those evils which we most righteously have deserved. Grant that those evils which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us be brought to naught;" then, my dear friends, shall we find that the rubs of life will only tend to smooth us, and we shall press on in anticipation to that land where sin and sorrow never enter; to that glorious inheritance, purchased for us by that blessed Saviour, who for us "endured the cross, and despised the shame." Let us think of His bitter sufferings, and then, with His strength, we shall be enabled to say, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" and, with David, we shall be able to say, "Though poor and in heaviness, Thy help, O God, shall lift me up."

" Lord, chisel, chasten, polish us,
Each blemish take away;
Prepare us for our heavenly home,
For Jesus' sake, we pray.

" And thus, thine image on us stamped,
Transport us to the shore,
Where not a stroke is ever felt,
For none is needed more."

ANOTHER LEAF FALLEN.

MANY girls have died—all girls must die. It was a sad season of consumption; and they had been falling off that autumn as the rose-leaves fall. Some had been gathered to the home of Jesus, that they might shed their fragrance there; but others had fallen, as many rose-leaves fall—to perish.

A message came to me—Mary was dying. She wished me to come and see her.

My first thought, when I got the message, was, Oh! how hard of Jesus to take *her*! Then I thought, Why did she not send for me sooner? But my third thought was best—I'll go at once. I went to see the dying girl; and while I sat with her, not speaking much—for she was very weak, and could bear only a little—I had time to look around and think.

The little room was lighted by a cheerful evening sunbeam. Mary sat in a big arm-chair, in which her father had often sat when he was a strong man; but he got a cough, and then he sat there oftener; and at last he sat *always* there, while hour by hour he gave back his strength to God; and then the arm-chair was empty. The widow and her family could not bear to see it so; but it was not so long. The only son came home sick, and he sat there; he was a little boy. The arm-chair was much too big for him, but they put pillows to support him, until they could not hold him up any longer, and it was of no use; so they laid him along, and put him in his father's grave.

Mary had loved that grave very much; it made her think of heaven; it was to her the very door; for she knew that when they laid her there, she would see her father and brother, and one she loved by far the best, Jesus her Saviour, and she would be in heaven. So Mary's turn of the big arm chair was come, and she was happy; not at first, for she loved her mother and sister, and she felt for them—they would be so lonely when she was taken away, and her mother would have but one child. It was so sad for her to think of only one, but Mary knew that she must die; and so, with many a tear, she loosened them from her heart; and as she let them go, she could the better trust in Jesus; so she was happy.

You may imagine, then, how surprised I was, as I sat beside her, when I saw the tears gather in her eyes, and silently roll down her

cheeks. She did not speak. I could not. I wondered what deep, hidden grief could be in her heart. I knew it was not for those she was leaving; it could be no worldly thought; what, then. I ventured, after a while, to ask why she wept. She told me one thought troubled her—only one, and it was this:—

“I can trust in Jesus just now,” she said, “but when I come to die, as I pass through the deep, dark waters, I fear I may doubt Him; and it would be so awful to die doubting Jesus!”

I tried to comfort her. I spoke of Jesus’ unchanging, everlasting love—of His promise, “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee.”

I told her Jesus knew what it was to die, and would sustain her, making his grace sufficient. But I had never trod the path she was about to tread; I knew not how deep its darkness, or how narrow the gates of death. I bade her fear not, but only trust Him.

I had to leave her; a long journey lay before me. I bade her “good night;” it was a last one, although not for ever. I held her hand, as I thought, ere I returned, it would be cold in death. I would have done anything for her; but nothing could be done. It seemed as if, in our journey to heaven, she had outrun me; and in the distance, I could see her about to enter the river.

I wished I could go with her—could raise her head above the stream, and speak of Jesus, as we crossed together; but wishes were in vain. I too must trust her to Jesus.

A few days had passed away, and then—another evening sunbeam lighted the little room, but Mary saw it not. The neighbours whispered that “the change” was coming, as they lifted her from the arm-chair, and laid her in bed. *Her* change was coming, but we may call it *ours*. We must change our lives from brightness to the glaze of death; our bodies from soft, warm health, to cold, clammy death; our souls from earth to—but I cannot tell you, you know—to *heaven or hell*.

Mary was changing. She saw not the sunbeam, although it was bright and cheerful. Her mother bent over her weeping, and Mary’s eyes were fixed on her. She spoke.

“Mother,” she said, “I cannot see you now, but I hear you; don’t weep.”

The moments were fleeting past not more swiftly than yours, but

hers were so few. She was close to the brink of the river; her feet were almost touching the waters. She called me, for a time forgetting that hundreds of miles separated us; but with deep anxiety, her mother answered, then bending down, she heard Mary's last whisper—

“I see Jesus now; I'm going home!”

That day the arm-chair was vacant, and the mother wept; but that day the angels rejoiced as they led a bright spirit to a mansion near the throne.

Poor timid child, she feared that Christ would leave her at the last; but as the darkness gathered about her soul, He came to her, and all was light. No longer must she trust Him. Faith was ended—was lost in sight.

MY MOTHER.

NEVER shall I forget the night my mother died. It was Sabbath night, and all that day she had been hoping God would call her home. Death to her was no unwelcome visitor. For many years Christ's service had she honoured, and now in life's last moments Christ sent His ministering spirits to honour her. Calm and resigned, she waited the coming of the Lord.

She bade us all farewell without a tear. Earth had no charms for her. Heaven was her hope, and eagerly did her soul look forward to the joys and glories of heaven's immortal blessedness. No anxieties or doubts disturbed her peaceful mind. The future was no uncertain existence, but the eye of faith, with a divine power, beheld beyond the grave the fruition of the Christian's hope. A Christian life! What peace and glory it sheds around the dying bed! What visions of beauty immortal beyond the tomb break upon the sight of a dying Christian! Philosophy forsakes its disciples in the dying hour; but Christianity here shines forth in all its divinity, and says, “Fear not, I am with you.”

In the still hour of midnight her spirit, saying, “Blessed be Jesus,” winged its flight to God who gave it, and I was left without a mother. Who can describe the agonies of that hour! the vain endeavour of my stricken soul to comprehend the greatness of my loss! I could not think my mother dead. She was motionless—still there was the same smile of Christian loveliness, and it seemed

to me only a sweet slumber; but I now know it was the sleep of the grave—a long, long sleep, only to be disturbed by the coming of that God whose service she had nobly honoured.

The room in which she died seems to me filled with the mystery of death, and yet the glory of her death dispels the gloom—I know she still lives. Whenever I enter that room she is present with me; that dreadful feeling of utter loneliness is gone; a thousand golden memories of my sainted mother crowd upon my weary soul: her Christian virtues, with a spiritual beauty almost exalted to perfection, rise before me, and in contemplation of their glory I am lost, and wonder why I did not love her more, when, with a mother's kindness and care, she watched over me. Once more I hear her kind counsels and prayers, feel the impress of a mother's kiss, the power of a mother's example, and the intensity of a mother's love. Oh, Memory, what a glorious faculty thou art! Daily dost thou bring to me, from thy rich treasures, hallowed associations of my departed mother. Why was she taken from me? Oh, the mystery of affliction, unless we look beyond the grave! Heaven now seems to me most desirable; for I have a mother there who loves me more than ever, with a love that is ever increasing and immortal. Now she is perfectly happy. Here she had her sorrows, for grief is the common lot of man; there her existence is but one scene of happiness in the presence of her blessed Saviour. I would not call her back, however much I miss her. Although she loved me much, now she loves Christ more, and has no desire to return to this world, full of sorrow and death. Still, I miss her more and more every day. Nothing supplies to me her loss, but my heart is full of loneliness. I go out at night when the stars are shining brightly, and every star seems to me her beaming countenance.

Such is the power of mind over matter, that the spirit of my departed mother should thus, to my mind, invest nature with additional beauty. I do not think of her as laid away in the darkness of the tomb, but as a glorified being, lost to the material, wrapt in the spiritual, at the right hand of God. Absent in the body, she is still present with me. If tempted, I hear her sweet voice warning me, and her hand guides me along life's weary pilgrimage. Her memory, redolent with a thousand virtues, warms my heart; and it is my life-long hope, that, when called from the world, I may meet my mother, never again to be separated, but through all eternity enjoy the sweetness and purity of her never dying love.

THE WORM AT THE ROOT.

A YOUNG sapling, slender, fair to the eye, perfect and promising, stood in a nursery of peaches by the side of full-grown, fruit-bearing trees. It looked upon the downy, gold, and crimson peaches ripening above it in the autumn sun with a longing eye, and dreamed of the day when it should be thus loaded with fruit, admired and praised by all.

"Ah, well," it murmured—and the breeze rippling through the leaves brought the sound to my ears—"patience! One or two seasons more and I shall be grafted, and then in spring I shall blush with sweet blossoms, and in autumn glow with tempting fruit. I hardly know how to wait!"

The spring returned, and the trees again assumed their leaves and flowers, rejoicing together in the wind and sunshine. At length, about midsummer, the owner of the nursery visited it with his gardener. Examining all the trees, he presently stopped before the young sapling—

"But see here," said he, "this tree does not look healthy; it is turning yellow; what is the matter?"

"Ah, I'm afraid there's a worm at its root," replied the gardener. "I ought to have noticed it before; I might have saved it; but it's too late now! It is a pity, for it was growing finely."

"Very well, remove it. We need its room for something else."

Accordingly, before long, the gardener came with his spade and dug up the young tree; and, as he had supposed, among the roots was a great, white canker-worm, fattening on the minute and tender rootlets, the very life of the tree. He then threw it, with some others in the same condition, into a heap of rubbish, where its leaves, shrunken and dried, were soon rustling mournfully in the wind. At length he set fire to the whole brush-heap, and of the aspiring young sapling nothing remained but dull, gray ashes.

A boy came from his sport to watch the fire, whose crackling and roaring he had heard. Straight and tall, healthy and intelligent, he looked like a boy one would like to stand and talk with, to hear his quick replies and see his eye sparkle with pleasant curiosity. His father will tell you he is the brightest child of his family; a most promising lad. He expects to see him live to enjoy the ample property he has gathered for him, to hold high places of honour,

praise, and trust among his fellow-men, and to be the pride and stay of his age.

But there is a side of this lad's character his father has never yet seen (fathers are so often blind where they most need the keenest sight); an unfavourable side, a deplorable side. There is a worm at the root of it, eating out its life. He is untrue. Falsehood is familiar to his lips—petty falsehood principally, though he is not a stranger to glaring, open lies—he tells a tale with a false colouring, loads astray by a wrong emphasis, he denies in such a way that he can say he did not deny;—though yet so young, he has travelled all the winding, dark, underground paths of untruth and deceit.

The gardener who stands by him now has seen the diseased spot in his character for a long time; so have the other servants and his companions. Only his parents cannot see it; the hand that might heal him is unconscious that he needs it. But honest David, the gardener, will now and then speak a warning word. The fire burned down, and the lad stood kicking about the ashes with the toe of his boot.

"I've been burning up some young peach trees," said David.

"Peach trees! What for?"

"They had the canker-worm among them, and would die soon. So we dug them up and burned them."

"What is the canker-worm?"

"It's a large white worm, that feeds on all the young roots, and so ruins the tree. What would you say if some one should tell you that when you are a man you will be cast out of honest society, just as these trees have been cast out of the nursery?"

"Me! I shouldn't believe it. I guess my father is rich enough to put me into good and honest society."

"Yes; but he can't keep you there unless you're fit to stay. If the worm that's preying on you now goes on, there'll be nothing good left in you when you are grown to be a man. Men will see that you are corrupt and dishonest, and soon you will be only fit to be trodden under foot, as you tread on these ashes. The boy that tells lies has got a canker-worm in his heart. He'd better look to it betimes, or by and bye, in disgrace and poverty he'll rue the day he let slip the chance of getting cured. I've seen life, my lad; mind if I'm not a true prophet!"

"Don't trouble yourself to prophesy about me; I'm not afraid!" said the boy, walking away.

Was David a true prophet? Most certainly he was, if these words of the Bible are true: "The transgressor shall be rooted out; and he that speaketh lies shall perish."

"NOTHING ELSE TO DO."

It was Sabbath afternoon, and the interval of divine service. I sat by the open window, reading, in the soft accents of Italy, the story of David's compassion for the remnant of Saul's house, because of his love for Jonathan. I had paused on that affecting expression, "*la benignità di Dio*"—God's loving-kindness—a pattern for us. How much of natural feeling had David to overcome, in showing mercy to the family of Saul, his persecutor! but, for Jonathan's sake, he was enabled to do it. Like one recovering from sickness, the sky was brightening, after weeks of drenching rain; the trees were bending their leaves to the light summer wind; and even the grass seemed to be enjoying the rest of the holy Sabbath. After months of toil and anxiety, I too was enjoying, through the goodness of God, a season of retirement and repose. Peace was around and within, when a loud, gruff voice exclaimed, "You know that you've nothing else to do, so come and walk with me." I looked up. Happily, the words were not addressed to me; but the speaker was near. I had once seen him in a Christian place of worship; but worldliness was stamped on his whole bearing. He passed on, but his words remained with me. Though idle in themselves, they were, I think, productive of good to me. May the thoughts which they suggested be profitable to others!

"Nothing else to do!" Oh, believer, bought with a price, this day reminds thee of thy exalted Lord. Early He rose from the sleep of death, to show that redemption work was finished, and the eternal felicity of the redeemed secured. Heaven's rest consists of spiritual works; and so is it with the earthly Sabbath of the heaven-bound pilgrim.

"Nothing else to do!" Christian parent, hast thou nothing to do for thy Lord to-day? Go, gather thy little ones around thee; speak to their hearts; tell them of a Saviour's love; picture to them the life-like narratives of Scripture; awake in them a love for sacred song.

"Nothing else to do!" Christian invalid, hast thou nothing to do for thy Lord to-day? True, thou canst not go forth, to sow beside all waters; but the culture of thine own heart is given to thee. Learn the difficult lesson, "Be still, and know that I am God." It is not easy, through many long years, to gaze, from thy couch of weakness, on the busy world moving on, unheeding of thee, and to say, with a hearty obedience, to the Father who loves thee, "Thy will be done." But this is thy task to-day: take the hard book to the foot of the cross, and it will not seem difficult in the solemn twilight of Calvary.

"Nothing else to do!" Christian watcher, to whom months of anxiety are appointed, hast thou nothing to do for thy Lord to-day? The joyous bells are ringing multitudes to the house of prayer. Debility does not detain thee; thou art full of vigour. Pain does not hinder thee, except that thy head aches sometimes in sympathy with thy heart. Thou art watching a beloved one gradually declining. The tabernacle is slowly, slowly crumbling. Though glory comes in through the chinks, yet thy heart is so bound to the fondly-tended one, that all thy earthly vocation seems wrapped up in him. He is the chief part of thine own existence. Gladly wouldst thou share thy strength with him. But it may not be. Yes, thou hast something to do. Take thy burden, and lay it on the bosom of Jesus. "He bore our sicknesses, He carried our sorrows." He has meted out, with His own loving and pierced hand, every drop in the bitter cup. The believer fears as he enters into the cloud; but, when he has remained there, a voice reassures him—a voice which the world knows not. He can trust his Father's faithfulness, even amid its misty shadows. Are there no peaceable fruits of righteousness appearing now in thee, O, thou tender of the sick man's couch? Go search for them to-day at the foot of the cross. Seek those passive virtues, which have no eclat in the eyes of men, and for which there will be no arena in heaven—contentment, patience, resignation, confidence, joyful acquiescence in the will of God. "Blessed are the poor in spirit,"—the beggars, the emptied ones.

"Nothing else to do!" Christian mourner, hast thou nothing to do for thy Lord to-day? The desire of thine eyes is removed with a stroke. Nature demands tears, but the Bible summons thee to duty. What! sleeps thy friend in Jesus? Another motive for exertion. Follow thou those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. Another jewel in the mediatorial crown. Another

star to sparkle above. Another blood-bought captive, for ever set free. Does dim uncertainty hang over the present of the departed one? Let this incite thee to greater watchfulness, prayerfulness, and agonizing effort, for the loved ones left behind, if perchance, thou mayest allure them to the heavenly shore.

"Nothing else to do!" Christian worker, Christian minister, be affectionately reminded that the Sabbath is the day of Emanuel's greatest triumphs. Pray, O pray, that the Lord of the harvest-field would thrust forth many zealous labourers. The world is growing old. Its superstitions are crumbling. But crime, though hoary, is vast, bulky, and strong. A reviving cry comes from the east, and from the west. Vice, with its hydra-heads, has been crushed in many places, by the Spirit's omnipotent breath. A peculiar blessing usually attends spiritual labour to-day. Go ye forth earnestly to be good, to get good, and to do good. For not till a prostrate world shall own its Lord, shall ye be able to say of schemes for "killing time," on the Lord's day, I have "nothing else to do."

LOVE WINS LOVE.

"MOTHER, the birdies all love father," said a little boy of five summers, as he stood with his mother, watching the robins, who were highly enjoying their morning meal of cherries, from the old tree that overhung the house.

"Does anybody else love father, Charlie?"

"Oh, yes! I love him, and you love him; but we know more than the birds."

"What do you think is the reason the birdies love your father?"

Charley did not seem to hear this question. He was absorbed in deep thought.

"Mother," at last he said, "all the creatures love father. My dog is almost as glad to see him as he is me. Pussy, you know, always comes to him, and seems to know exactly what he is saying. Even the old cow follows him all round the meadow, and the other day I saw her licking his hand, just as a dog would. What can be the reason, mother?"

"Think, Charlie,—try and find out a reason yourself."

"I think it is because father loves them, mother. You know he will often get up, when he is tired too, to give pussy something to

eat if she is hungry; and he pulls carrots for the cow to eat from his hand, and pats her and talks to her; and somehow I think his voice never sounds so pleasant as when he talks to the creatures."

"I think his voice sounds pleasant when talking to his little boy."

Charlie smiled. "Father loves me," he said, "and I love him dearly. He loves the birds, too, I am sure. He whistles to them every morning when they are eating cherries, and they are not a bit afraid of him, though he is almost near enough to catch them. They look at him with their funny little eyes, and chirp and eat away just as if they knew he liked to see them. I wish you could hear him whistle to the "*bogalink*," as little Mamy calls them. They come and sit on a twig, close by him, and sing so loud, and make such funny noises. It always makes me laugh to hear him try to do as they do. I wish everything loved me as well as they do father."

"Do as father does, Charlie, and they will. Love all living things, and be kind to them. Do not speak roughly to the dog. Don't pull pussy's tail, nor chase the hens, nor try to frighten the cow. Never throw stones at the birds. Never hurt nor tease anything. Speak gently and lovingly to them. They know as well as you do who has a pleasant voice. Feed them and seek their comfort, and they will love you, and everybody that knows you will love you too."

KEEPERS AT HOME:

OR, THE WOMEN OF ATHENS.

IN a recent History of Greece, we have the following statement:—

- "Aristophanes anticipated most of the schemes of political and social reform, which have been discussed of late years, and brought them upon the comic stage. In one play, the doctrine of woman's right to an equal or superior share of political power and honour is humourously burlesqued. The women of Athens, discontented with the state of public affairs, and stimulated by the eloquence of a lady who has a violent desire to address the people, are represented as plotting a scheme of revolution, by which the reins of government shall be placed in their hands. Accordingly, after having duly practised speaking in a preliminary meeting, they manage to steal their husbands' garments, and, taking their seats very early in the Pnyx, hurry a decree through all the stages of legislation, transferring to the women the supreme power of the State."

Truly there is nothing new under the sun. The women of the nineteenth century, who have so gravely and bravely fought for their fancied rights, may find all their arguments in the old comedies of Athens. If there were no restive spirits among the women of Greece, who sighed for the liberty enjoyed by fathers and brothers, we must conclude that the odd conceit originated in the fertile imagination of the poet, that he seized it eagerly as new and comical, and too good to be lost. The idea of their noble women asking for, or taking the privilege of declaiming in the Agora or legislating in the Pnyx, was ridiculous and absurd enough to be enlarged upon, clothed in appropriate costume, and taken upon the stage for the amusement of the great assembly on a festal day.

The great body of Grecian women, of the noble families, were keepers at home. Spinning, weaving, and embroidery were their favourite employments. The theatre and other places of public amusement they did not grace with their presence. It was contrary to the whole spirit of the nation, that woman should take any part in public affairs, or stand on the rostrum as a teacher of men.

This seems to throw some light upon the meaning of Paul's teachings in his letters to the Corinthian Christians. He preached Christianity, but he did not try to overthrow the Government, or make new laws, or change the customs of society. He would not take woman from her place, make her a public speaker, a voter in the public assembly; he would not call *that* womanly which was considered unwomanly by the best women of the nation. He could stand boldly in Athens or Corinth and proclaim the everlasting gospel, but he could not declaim against the rulers,—he could not • change the order of society, for his religion forbade it,—the precepts of his Master forbade it. And more, it was against the spirit of the religion he preached. What precept of that holy religion teaches a woman to leave her home, her domestic employments, and become a loud-voiced teacher of men, a voter, a legislator? Is it the one that calls a meek and quiet spirit an ornament of great price? Is it the one that calls modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety, better than gold, or pearls, or costly array?

On this point, Christianity was not at war with Grecian customs; and Paul exclaims, "It is a shame for women to speak in the church." It is a shame here, in this heathen nation, for women to speak publicly; much more for you Christian women so to do, thereby bringing • a reproach upon religion, and making it an excuse for a custom so

contrary to its own teachings. A shame for heathen women to leave the work God had given, and become disorganizers of society, public instructors; much more for Christian women professing love and obedience to God.

HIDDEN THINGS.

WE make great mistakes when we say we know each other. A slight acquaintance we may have; a slight revelation we may make;—we may allow people to listen to our words, and see our faces, and learn our actions. But much of our real characters, the inner life of our spirits, is a sealed book, which strangers eyes may not read, scan they never so keenly!

How often have we met in the circle of acquaintances and friends, when perhaps our laugh has been the merriest! Ready to our lips has sprung the quick retort, the eager jest. And who has dreamed how the sad heart has wailed silently on, meanwhile? Who supposed that after the “good night” had been spoken, we lay alone in the dense midnight, crushed down, down by the bitter hidden sorrow, which has pressed burning, bitter tears from the weary eyes—sorrow too deep—nay, perhaps too sacred—for the eye of the fondest friend which we have to bleed under, to grapple with, to endure, known only to our own souls and our God.

Or worse still, ay, very far worse—some of us know what it is to be in Christian company, to hear of and to assent to things, which we know to be truth, but which at that time for ourselves we cannot believe. To tell, to write to others of that everlasting precious Friend whose tenderness is ready for the love-thirsty, while the sad cry of our own hearts is, “Oh that I knew where I might find Him!” To speak of the glories of that eternal state of felicity, when Jesus’ friends shall sit beside Him, while the inward sigh will not be stifled, “I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him but not nigh.” Oh! this is agony indeed; this is unutterable anguish; and yet we may endure it and smile on!

Oh, brothers and sisters, deal gently with one another! Surely you have known what it is to suffer thus! Surely you have walked with travel-worn feet and aching heart, while others have imputed to you wrong motives, and have proved that they understood you not! Do not add to your friends’ suffering. Oh! pity all with their hidden sorrows.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

CHRISTIAN TRAINING.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING,
FEBRUARY 10TH, 1861,

BY THE

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

(In behalf of the London Orphan Asylum, Clapton),

IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY-AT-HILL,
EASTCHEAP.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."—PROVERBS xxii. 6.

LONDON:
JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER-HOUSE COURT,
NORTH SIDE OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, AND PATERNOSTER ROW.

—
1861.

The Mother's Magazine.—March, 1861.

A Sermon

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."—
PROVERBS XXII. 6.

MANY persons in their hearts doubt the truth of this saying. Even now-a-days, when the old-fashioned and unchristian prejudices against the education of the poor have either been dispelled or at least so discredited that men are ashamed openly to give utterance to them, we still hear the remark that, after all, crime does not diminish with all our teaching; that boys and girls brought up with the advantages of well-ordered schools are, as they grow up, quite as fond of vice as ever their uninstructed fathers and mothers were; that there is not less self-indulgence now than there used to be—not fewer ungodly marriages lightly entered upon, without any thought of the deep solemnity which Christ has stamped on the marriage vow—not less profane swearing among the lower classes of society, for it is granted that the higher are, in this respect, somewhat improved; and that neither is there more honesty in men's dealings with one another. Brethren, is this true? With all our efforts to give a Christian education to the young of this generation, are they not a whit the better? Are the young men and young women who during the last ten or twenty years have been trained in our schools as thoughtless, worldly, and ungodly as though they had never entered them? I trust not. But if the allegation have any truth in it—as I trust it has not—I suspect it will show, not certainly that education, still less Christian education, is useless, but that those who make this allegation are not aware how difficult a thing it is to give a really Christian education. The education which we call Christian may, after all, be but a very poor education; and, if there be any truth in what we hear men thus saying, it ought seriously to excite us to review our whole system, to see wherein there is any deficiency in it, and wherein it needs improvement.

I remember to have heard it said by one who had much experience in the training of boys, shortly before I myself became engaged in that most responsible occupation, that it was melancholy to reflect how many sons of religious, of evangelical parents of the higher classes, trained from their infancy in Christian homes, turned out very badly in our public schools. I remember to have been very much shocked at the observation, and quite unable to believe it. But I must say that, after experience convinced me, that there was a great deal of truth in it. What then, I asked myself, is there not a blessing from God upon the efforts of pious parents for their children's souls? Has all the early Christian teaching given to these boys been lost? Am I to suppose that Solomon spake not truly when he said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it?" Not so. Christian

teaching given to children, like Christian prayers offered up for them, must, by God's grace, produce abundant fruit in the sanctification of their souls. There will be exceptions, doubtless, where the natural evil heart of unbelief doggedly resists all good Christian influences, but the general rule must be on the other side. If there is any truth in God's word—nay, if there be any truth even in natural religion—that Christian training must have the blessing of Christ, according to his promise to make the Christian child.

But then the question remains. What is Christian training? Is there not, I ask myself, often, a great mistake amongst pious people, as to what Christian training of the young is? For example: it is by no means Christian training, to accustom a child to the use of religious phrases, the meaning of which he does not realise in his heart. Much talk about religion has, often, a bad effect upon a child's heart, if he has not been taught to associate with the religious phrases which he uses, distinct efforts to serve God in Christ, and to exercise some self-restraint for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake. It is Christian habits, not Christian words, that constitute Christian education. This is an error often committed, in training children in a pious home. There is great danger, in such cases, lest the heart become hardened by the very fact, that religious words are very much upon a child's lips, while he is but little accustomed to do religious acts, and restrain himself for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

Thus, the children of religious parents, sometimes, have not received a real religious training, though they have been accustomed to religious words which have a reality, it may be, in the mouths of their elders, but, in their mouths, have no reality, because they are not accompanied by distinct efforts to form religious habits for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

Neither, again, is the acquisition of what is commonly called religious knowledge, in itself, religious training. A thorough knowledge of all the events of our Lord's life may have nothing really religious in it. A child may learn the lesson of all that Christ did and said, just as he learns a lesson of the geography of Palestine, or the history of Rome. He may learn, in like manner, all the orthodox statements of the catechism, and all the great truths relating to the reconciliation of the soul to God through faith in the Redeemer's blood, without anything religious in his learning. He may learn the theory of Christian faith as he learns the theory of arithmetic. It is much to be feared, that, in some would-be religious training of many pious homes, there is too much of religious words, without the child being accustomed to religious acts; and that, in the would-be religious training of many of our schools, there is too much of the notion, that the acquisition of knowledge on religious subjects is, itself, a religious training. If there be any truth, then, in the complaints which, I have said, we sometimes hear, let us examine carefully for ourselves, whether the fault be not in our mistake as to what constitutes real religious education. "Train up a child," says Solomon, "in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." He does not say, *teach* a child to know the way in which he should go—give him knowledge merely as to what that way is; but *train* him in it—habituate

him, day by day, to walk in it by the Holy Spirit's help : then, when he is old, will he not depart from God's way ; for, by the grace of God, it will have become his second nature—his renewed nature, given him from above, and he will be sure to walk in it.

We return, then, to the point from which we started, that if children brought up in our schools do not when they grow to maturity become better men and women than those who had less advantages than they, the fault, if it has been really the case, is not it some mistake as to the training they have received. God's promise to bless Christian training does not fail, unless it be through some defect in our system which makes it not what it professes to be—a real Christian training of the child's soul, leading him on day by day through acts of self-restraint, through good Christian habits, to lead a Christian life, as in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The day is, I think, now past when any question can be raised as to whether education to be sound must necessarily be religious. No one disputes, I suppose, that it is a desirable thing in itself for a child to learn reading and writing, to keep accounts, and add as much secular knowledge as possible. But what I desire is, that the acquisition of such knowledge is to be regarded not as the complete training of the child's whole nature. Christians dare not look upon children without remembering that they have immortal souls, and without calling to mind how the Lord Jesus Christ bade little children to come to him, rebuking those who would have kept them from him. He put his hands upon them and blessed them, and showed, even by his outward gesture and deed, that he loved their souls. Of course, in some sense, even where a mere secular education is given, there is some attention paid to the child's soul. He is taught regularity and zeal in study, and obedience—excellent things in their way, and all of them having to do with his soul. But what we contend is, that if such habits are taught, to be effectual they must be taught on right principles ; and therefore the moment education goes beyond the mere mechanical imparting of a few points of knowledge—the moment it takes upon itself to regulate a child's conduct—it must do it either religiously or with the neglect of religion with the neglect of the motives which the Lord Jesus Christ enjoins. Moreover, we hold also that a child with an immortal soul, for which the Lord Jesus Christ has died, has a right to be taught, not reading and writing, arithmetic, and secular knowledge merely, but his relations to the God who made him and has redeemed him—what is the full will of God in Christ as to the regulation of his conduct—and what are the grounds of his hope of dwelling with God when his earthly life fails him.

All Christians hold that children ought to be taught these things, and to be taught them not as a matter of head-knowledge only, but so that they may influence the heart and life. All Christians agree that the education of children, to be at all real and perfect, must be a distinctly Christian, religious education. The only question raised among Christians is, whether it ought necessarily to fall to the schoolmaster and schoolmistress to conduct this thorough Christian training. Doubtless, for those children who are blessed to have earthly parents spared to them, a great portion—by far the greater portion—of their religious training must devolve upon the parents.

Let all parents remember this, that they can never delegate to any other that most important part of education which the Lord has laid upon them. No parent can be relieved from the responsibility of himself giving a Christian training to his child, by selecting a good school in which it may have good teachers; for the father himself, and the mother, in earlier years—these are the teachers whom God has himself appointed to be the especial trainers of the child's soul. But where, in such a case as that school for which I am to plead to-day, there is no parent; the children are orphans. What a responsibility this throws upon those who are at the head of such a school. What an office is that of master and mistress to this vast number of children, some four hundred, to whom these teachers must stand in the relation, not only of masters and mistresses, but in the place of their parents. How many prayers ought they to offer up for themselves, that God would give them wisdom for this work? How ought we to be interested in the institution in which they serve, to pray that God may bless them, and give them wisdom for their work, and make them faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ! The masters and mistresses of such a school as that for which I plead to-day, must stand to the children in the relation of a second parent. Indeed, this will be found to be the case in a great majority of our schools for the very poor throughout the country. In these, we know that a great part of the religious education that is given, must be given by the teacher, or will not be given at all. It is, indeed, the especial business of ministers of Christ, to look with care to the young of their flocks. Our ordination service makes this a most prominent and important part of our duty; but still it will be through those who are many hours of every day in communication with the children, both in our schools for the poor, and in such an institution as that for which I to-day plead, it is on the teachers that must devolve the great business of giving a religious training.

To bring the nature of the duty Christ thus requires of them home to their feelings, we shall ask the master and mistress of any school, what pains they take to find out whether the children placed under their charge live in habits of private prayer? It is lamentable to think that, in many cases where public religious instruction is given, there is little done to lead children to habits of private prayer; and yet, without this, all the religious instruction that is given them will be unavailing. And this is but one specimen of many points to which Christian masters and mistresses will be sure to direct their attempts to give a Christian training to the child. I should advise masters and mistresses, if possible, to have some quiet, private conversation with the children, one by one, that thus they may be able to form some opinion of the religious state of each of them. Thus, gradually, a knowledge may be acquired for training each individual well; for we cannot treat them in masses if we do not know what is their state taken one by one. Nor will this be found to be so difficult as at first sight it appears. Children, however many they may be gathered together in our schools, enter them at first in small numbers; and those days of first entrance on school, how valuable are they when the heart is soft with the thoughts of home, which has but now been left, when kind words are sure to be appreciated, and to make a deep impression on the heart!

My dear friends, such a duty as this, thus urged upon us, shows how weighty and difficult an office that of a Christian master and mistress is. It is the Lord Jesus Christ alone who can give adequate strength for the fulfilment of the duties of such an office. We ought all to pray earnestly that he will pour forth of his Spirit on all the teachers of the young around us. They have an important office in Christ's Church. We ought to pray that their own souls may first feel the blessing of the knowledge of the love of Christ, and that then they may be made instruments to the souls of others. This is certainly a most solemn truth, that no one can give a really Christian training in a Christian school, who is not himself a real Christian. How

anxiously ought all of us, then, in Christian schools, to watch that every means be taken rightly to influence the minds of those who are to become teachers. Think of the great influence they must exercise on the generation that is rising around us, and let us be diligent in every way to see that we do what we can, that good teachers—good Christian teachers—may be found in all our schools.

And here I would say a very few words on a subject which is too much neglected in connection with the religious instruction of the young. As to our common schools, we very often hear the clergy lament that young men and young women, who, when they were children, regularly attended church with their Sunday school, fall off from this godly practice as soon as they come to be their own masters. Here also, I suspect we shall find that the fault is much our own. Children in our churches are often but little thought of in the general addresses which are delivered from the pulpit, and often they are put in such parts of our churches that they can hardly join in the service; and then we are surprised that the worship of God becomes a burden, and does not reach their souls.

In such an institution as that for which I plead to-day, there is every facility given for direct addresses to the children, such as they can distinctly understand. Let those whose business it is thus to address them, remember that the instruction of children in such addresses, in the Lord Jesus Christ's name, is a distinct business by itself. He who feels how valuable are the souls of the children that are being trained in our schools, will not fail to speak distinctly to them, and to use every means to make them understand the service of our church, and to join in it from the heart. Let it not be thought that, in thus addressing those who teach, I am forgetful to-day of those children who are taught. While we thus speak to their elders, and urge them to think of what importance are the souls of the children committed to them, will not the children themselves understand how much of their Christian training does devolve upon themselves? If it is right that masters and mistresses should ask children as to their private prayers, shall each child not ask himself, what are the prayers he offers? Has he learned that the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed his friend—that he is ready to be a nearer friend than father and mother, or brother, or sister—that there is free access to him at all times, and to the Father through him, in prayer? God grant that the children who are trained in this institution may ever remember how near the Lord Jesus Christ is to them, and how ready he is to take them by the hand and to lead them to the full knowledge and love of him. And if it be true that this institution for which I plead to-day, is conducted on these Christian principles—without which there can be no real education of immortal souls—am I not justified in urging all of you who are here present, to do what you can to aid this institution? You have before you a paper, which states what are its wants, and what the sum of money required every year, to enable it to perform its duties. You see how so large sum as £8,000 depends upon voluntary contributions. It is by such occasions as that which has called us together to-day, that this institution must mainly be supported. Shall we not, when we consider what is the value of the four hundred souls that are trained in this school, resolve that we will do what we can, each one of us, in its behalf? And those of us who are blessed with homes of our own, remember that there is an especial claim on behalf of those whose homes have been early broken up. Shall we not show our thankfulness to God for the mercies that he gives to ourselves and to our own children, by securing a Christian home, and a Christian training, to those who, without some effort on our part, must suffer grievous loss?

The London Orphan Asylum has been in operation forty-seven years. Its object is to maintain, clothe and educate respectable Fatherless Children, of either sex, without means adequate to their support, and *wherever resident*. The Orphans of Professional or Mercantile men, Farmers, Master Traders, and Clerks; or Children whose Parents have lost their lives in the Army, Navy, or Marine Service, are always esteemed the first claimants on this Charity. Children are eligible between the ages of seven and eleven, and are usually retained in the Asylum until they have completed their fifteenth year. Since its formation the Charity has benefited two thousand six hundred and twenty-nine Orphans. One hundred and thirty-eight Girls, and two hundred and eighty-four Boys are now on the Establishment. Thirty Children were Elected on the 28th ultimo. The Children are trained and educated to fill suitable situations in life; the Boys being usually employed as Clerks, &c., while the Girls qualify as Governesses, National School-mistresses, &c. The income arising from Funded Property yielded, last year, under £2000 per annum, while the necessary expenses amounted to nearly £11,000; so that the Managers have to depend on annual and voluntary aid for £9000, part of which sum is made up by collections after Sermons in aid of the funds of the Institution. Annual Subscription for one Vote at each Election, 10s. 6d.; for two Votes, £1 1s. Life Subscription, for one Vote at each Election, £5 5s.; for two Votes, £10 10s. Office, 1, St. Helen's Place, Bishopsgate Street, E.C.

Sketches and Essays.

FAMILY DUTIES AND SINS.

BY THE REV. RALPH WARDLAW.

Proverbs xiv. 1-3.

THERE is a fulness in the word of God, of which the conviction grows on every fresh perusal, and becomes still the stronger, the closer and more minute our investigation of its various parts. It addresses itself (though, for the best possible reasons, under no systematic and formal arrangement) to persons in all the various relations and conditions of life. Sometimes we find important perceptive directions conveyed in simple descriptive touches of character, in which approbation on the one hand, or disapprobation on the other, is manifestly designed to be implied. Thus it is in the first verse of this chapter: "Every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands."

Here we have female wisdom and female folly contrasted, with special reference to their appropriate department—the management of domestic concerns. It is a common saying amongst ourselves, and it is a pithy and a true one, that "a fortune in a wife is better than a fortune with one." From the situation which women occupy in the household, it might previously be supposed (and the supposition is daily verified in fact) that a vast deal depends on them for the comfort, the independence, the respectability, the honour, and the advancement of families. We understand "house" here, as in many other places, to mean family; the "building" of the house, the raising of the family; and the "plucking down" of the house, the depression of the family, in the various ways just enumerated.

Suppose, what many a time happens, to use the word, of the saying just quoted, "a fortune with a wife," but the wife herself, the owner and bringer of the fortune, destitute of discretion, incapable of managing her domestic affairs or of keeping account of her expenditure; without home habits; vain, extravagant, fond of finery and show, and rivalry of her superiors; ever gadding about, and ever squandering money with thoughtless indifference,—the fortune will

The Mother's Magazine, April. 1861.

give anything but domestic happiness while it lasts, and that will not be long. It will be the same, indeed, if such a woman have her will and her way, whether the fortune be her own or her husband's. Many a time have females been the means of bringing families down, that before were thriving, and rising in comfort and respectability. This has arisen from their total want of the domestic virtues of activity, economy, and discretion — of all that passes under the general name of management. "Many a family," says Matthew Henry, "is brought to ruin by ill housewifery, as well as by ill husbandry." On the contrary, a prudent, industrious, frugal, domestic managing wife, animated in all her duties by affection, conjugal and maternal, dignified by the graces of true religion, and guided in her daily course by a wise discretion, has often essentially aided in bringing forward a family, even from a condition of inferiority, to respectability, independence, and honour, and of retrieving its affairs, when by previous mismanagement brought low.

It is at once the duty and the interest of husband and wife to co-operate in promoting the common benefit of the family. They must be one in principle and in aim. If not, while the one is "building," the other will be "pulling down;" the one will overturn what the other has reared; while the one gathers, the other will scatter. Too often may husband and wife thus be seen counter-working each other; the one doing, the other undoing; the one bringing in, the other throwing out. The verse before us relates only to the wife's side of the house. Let wives remember, that all the industry and toil of their husbands will be vain, unless, on their part, it is seconded by management and economy. It is wonderful, in the families of the workman and the peasant, to see the difference of appearance and of real, substantial comfort, on the same means, between one where the wife is cleanly, active, orderly, thrifty, and cheerful, and another where she happens, unhappily for her husband and her children, to be an idle, dirty, disorderly, peevish slattern. The latter character should never be seen, nor any approach to it, in "women professing godliness." Christian wives, emulate one another; and emulate those "godly women," who are commended in Scripture, in sedulous attention to the tempers and duties that become you in your domestic relations. Let the family, next to the soul, be the first care. And beware of allowing even a professed concern for the interests of the soul unduly to interfere with, and jostle out

of place, any of your incumbent domestic duties. Everything is beautiful in its place and time. I have no idea of that religion which allows a woman, under pretext of enjoying spiritual privileges, and making the most of time and means for the soul, to gad about, visiting, and calling, and talking, and hearing sermons, and attending committees, when her presence and active superintendence are wanted at home, and imperative domestic claims and duties are neglected. Wives must make their families their first care; and if, by regularity and diligence in the discharge of their respective trusts at home, they can redeem time for the more private or more public calls of benevolence, or for hearing a sermon, or attending a meeting, or enjoying the benefit of a little Christian society, it is well. When the two are thus made compatible, "her own works will praise her in the gates." But if, by attending to other calls, her husband is left comfortless, and the food, and clothing, and education of her children are neglected—she may be "building" elsewhere, but not where she should be; she is "the foolish" woman whose hands "pull down" her own house—and who is in the world, a discredit to the religion she professes, and in the church a stumbling-block to fellow-professors.

SELF CULTIVATION.*

"Is it right," inquired Agnes Macartney, "for a dying and immortal family to spend so much time in self-cultivation?"

"I would say, my dear," replied her aunt, to whom she proposed this question, "never, at the age you have reached, lose any opportunities of usefulness, for such engagements. I think, however, nothing is required but industry and method to find appropriate hours in the day for ministering to the comfort of our fellow-creatures, both within and around our own domestic circle, without neglecting the care of our souls, the cultivation of our minds, or even those external acquirements, which increase our usefulness by rendering us more agreeable.

How can you better employ your leisure than by increasing those qualifications which may prove useful to you in various situations of life? Depend upon it, those who attend best to themselves, are the very persons who do most for others.

* See "Agnes Macartney." Wertheim and Co.

The method and regularity, which are requisite, keep the mind alert; while variety of pursuit prevents weariness, and preserves the spirit cheerful. Whereas, a person who is but half employed, has time to sink into an inactivity and listlessness, from which it is difficult to rouse. You would not turn with the same vigour and elasticity from a vacant hour to engage in active duty, as you do from reading, writing, or even music, drawing, or gardening. As Doddridge says, "Let one employment be your rest from another," and thus they will prove a pleasant round of occupations; your energies being always free and in motion, will only have to turn this way or that, as occasion requires, without encountering the more violent changes from idleness to exertion—a change which demands more resolution than you can well conceive. At the same time, you must be careful not to overtask your powers, for that is as great an error as the one I have warned you against. If you have more occupations than will fill your hours, you cannot arrange them with method. Instead of order, therefore, would come hurry and confusion; and, consequently, irritability of temper, instead of cheerful diligence; while the close of the day would be clouded by dissatisfaction at finding half you intended to accomplish, left undone."

No acquisition, which renders you valuable or pleasing to others, particularly none which helps to diffuse a charm over your own domestic circle, should be despised, unless, in gaining it, you neglect a more urgent useful duty.

We look to our females for a large portion of our daily comfort; and to the younger members of the family for much of its cheerfulness. And in the wider sphere of acquaintance some trifling skill may give you influence capable of being improved to higher purposes. You wish to dedicate yourself, body, mind and soul, to your gracious Redeemer; yet, while you say,

"I yield my powers to Thy command,
To Thee I consecrate my days,"

why not clothe the grateful gift with all the capability possible?

Deep and powerful souls adjust every thing in silence, and make no noise either with their doings or themselves. They go on their way like the work of God. •

NOVEL READING.

NEVER before did so large a proportion of the current literature consist of works of imagination, and never before did they, as a class, display so much ability and artistic skill. Much of the literary talent of the time has been turned into this channel. Many a genius, who, in a former period, would have expended his powers in producing an epic poem, or a ponderous history, or peradventure a formidable folio of divinity, now seeks for honour and immortality in a series of novels.

Young women, hardly arrived at the age of legal majority, put out books that sell by thousands; and a host besides male and female, whom no man can number, contribute to swell the steadily increasing flood that issues from the press.

The above facts indicate another fact; viz., that novels are read by every description of persons, and by many who read nothing else. The high and the low, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, the old and the young, men and women, boys and girls, yield alike to the fascination—some for the sake of amusement, and the desire of a new sensation; some from curiosity to see, for themselves, what has excited, so strongly, the interest of others; and a few for the commendable purposes of becoming acquainted with every form of intellectual manifestation. The records of every popular public library will show, I apprehend, that of the books most called for within a given period, more than half are novels.

The effect of this kind of reading on the mental health is what we have to consider in this inquiry. Of course, it varies with the character of every individual mind, and with the circumstances that accompany it. Generally speaking, however, there can be no question that excessive indulgence in novel reading necessarily enervates the mind, and diminishes its power of endurance. In other departments of literature, such as biography and history, the mental powers are more or less exercised by the ideas which they convey. Facts are stored up in the memory; hints are obtained for the further pursuit of knowledge; judgments are formed respecting character and actions; original thoughts are elicited; a spirit of investigation is excited; and, more than all, life is viewed as it really has been and must be lived. A mind thus furnished and disciplined is provided with a fund of reserved power to fall back upon when

assailed by adverse forces, which all of us, in some shape or other, must expect to encounter. In novel reading, on the contrary, the mind passively contemplates the scenes that are brought before it, and which, being chiefly addressed to the passions and emotions, naturally please, without the necessity of effort or preparation. Of late years, a class of books has arisen, the sole object of which is to stir the feelings, not by ingenious plots—not by touching the finer chords of the heart, and skilfully unfolding the springs of action—but by coarse exaggerations of every sentiment, by investing every scene in glaring colours, and, in short, every possible form of unnatural excitement. In all this there is little or no addition to one's stock of knowledge; no element of mental strength is evolved, and no one is better prepared by it for encountering the stern realities of life. The sickly sentimentality which craves this kind of stimulus is as different from the sensibility of a well-ordered mind as the crimson flush of disease from the ruddy glow of high health. A mind that seeks its nutriment chiefly in books of this description is closed against the genial influences that flow from real joy and sorrow, and from all the beauty and heroism of common life. A refined selfishness is apt to prevail over every better feeling; and when the evil day comes, the higher sentiments which bind us to our fellow-men by all the ties of benevolence, and justice, and veneration, furnish no support nor consolation.

SARAH JUDSON AND THE BURMESE FREEBOOTERS.

On the evening of the fourth day, as it deepened into night, the books of study were thrown aside, and the book of God taken in their stead; then the prayer was raised to heaven, and the little family went to rest. Feeble were the rays of the one pale lamp, close by the pillow of the young mother, scarce throwing its light upon the infant resting on her bosom, and penetrating into the remote darkness but by feeble flickerings. So sleep soon brooded over the shut eyelids, and silence folded its solemn wings about the little habitation. The infant stirred, and the mother opened her eyes. Why was she in darkness? and what objects were those scattered so strangely about her apartment, just distinguishable from the gray shadows?

The lamp was soon relighted, and startling was the scene which it revealed. There lay, in odd confusion, trunks, boxes, and chests of drawers, all rifled of their contents; and strewed carelessly about the floor, were such articles as the marauders had not considered worth their taking. While regarding in consternation, not appreciable by those who have access to the shops of an American city, this spoiling of their goods, Mrs. Boardman chanced to raise her eye to the curtain beneath which her husband had slept, and she thought of the lost goods no more. Two long gashes, one at the head and the other at the foot, had been cut in the muslin; and there had the desperate villains stood, glaring on the unconscious sleeper with their fierce murderous eyes, while the booty was secured by their companions. The bared, swarthy arm was ready for the blow, and the sharp knife, or pointed spear, glittered in their hands. Had the sleeper opened his eyes, had he only stirred, had but a heavy, long-drawn sigh startled the cowardice of guilt—ah, had it! But it did not. The rounded limbs of the little infant lay motionless as their marble counterfeit; for if their rosy lips had moved but to the slightest murmur, or the tiny hand crept closer to the loved bosom in her baby dreams, the chord in the mother's breast must have answered, and the death-stroke followed. But the mother held her treasure to her heart, and slept on. Murderers stood by the bedside, regarding with callous hearts the beautiful tableau; and the husband and father slept. But there was one eye open—the eye that never slumbers—a protecting wing was over them, and a soft, invisible hand pressed down their sleeping lids. Nearly every article of value that could be taken away had disappeared from the house; and, though strict search was made throughout the neighbourhood, no trace of them was ever discovered.

THE BEST JEWEL TO WEAR.—Jewels are an ornament to women, but a blemish to men. They bespeak either effeminacy or a love of display. The hand of a man is honoured in working, for labour is his mission; and the hand that wears its riches on its fingers, has rarely worked honestly to win them. The best jewel a man can wear is his honour. Let that be bright and shining, well set in prudence, and all others must darken before it.

THEY THAT FEARED THE LORD SPAKE OFTEN TOGETHER.

"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."—Mal. iii. 16.

How little considered in this day, and how much less acted up to. Alas! I must again acknowledge my shortcomings in this respect: how unlike a Christian is my conduct—how little brilliancy shines forth like unto a jewel. Truly indeed does one need the purifying, the scouring, to rub off the dust and rubbish engendered by such daily contact with worldly cares and everyday's calls. Who, by my demeanour, can take knowledge of me as being one of the Lord's jewels? Only Him who counts them up, and will lose none of His own; and mercifully will grant that not one shall be missing. But deeply humbled would I feel before my God, that after all the pains He has taken, that I am not bettered by the cross. Too, too frequent, when visited by a Christian friend, am I so absorbed with my affliction, and the every-day's cares and anxieties, that the whole time is spent conversing on these or like frivolous matters, which are but of short duration; while the more important subject, the best or eternal things, are forgotten. I blush and am covered with confusion when I consider that the dear Lord should hearken and hear the converse of those that fear His name—that I have not glorified Him more, and been found uttering forth His praise. For, alas! my soul, what is there to be recorded before Him in His book of remembrance of thee?—though thou art the daily recipient of such grace and manifold mercies at His hand, and yet thou hopest thou art among those that fear His name and think upon Him. Oh, that I could and had showed forth more whose I am and whom I serve. Were there more thinking upon our Lord's name, surely there would be more conversing together of those things that make for peace; more union one with another, and the tongue more ready to utter forth His mighty acts, testifying to each other His helping hand manifested under our varied sorrows and adversities, when wave after wave has at seasons threatened to upset the shattered barque. But, notwithstanding all thy backwardness, oh, my soul, to glorify thy God by speaking to His praise, and declaring His marvellous works and His superabounding mercy, He has never forsaken thee,

but been ever near at hand; and though it may be almost at the last extremity, has whispered, "Fear not, behold it is I;" "Lo, I am with you alway." I am ashamed for my forgetfulness, and need indeed afresh, yea, daily and hourly—to apply to that precious fountain of Christ's blood, and to cry out with one of old, "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." "Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." Lord, remember thy dust, and grant that one and all that fear thee may think less of self, worldly concerns, and anxieties and perplexities, and more of thee and thy gracious doings with thy children; and may many take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and be found "seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;" and by the lustre that shines forth, testify that we are among the Lord's jewels. Grant these desires, and give power and grace so to act and speak; and then praise will redound to thy dear name, and gratitude flow forth for all thy manifold mercies vouchsafed. Even so, dearest Lord. Amen.—*Gospel Magazine*.

A STOLEN FLOWER.

I HAVE a flower-plot in front of my house, in which the flowers are interspersed with a few evergreens. Considerable pleasure is derived by my friends and myself from it. In winter, it delights us to see the green leaves of the evergreens, when the forest trees are stript of their leaves and the flowers have disappeared; when the cold rain makes the neighbourhood black and forbidding, or the colder snow makes it colourless and unvaried, or the colder frost makes it hard and stiff. In spring, it delights us to see their leaves becoming greener; and in summer, it delights us to see them sending forth new leaves, to take the place of those that fall off, and to make the number larger than it was the preceding year. Among these evergreens is a rhododendron, just before the window of the room in which I sit. I cannot tell all the pleasure that small, flowering shrub (for it is very young as yet) affords. Every time I go out, or come in, or look out at the window, or pace along the walks, or show my garden to a visitor, it seems to smile upon me, and to say, "How happy I wish you to be." And, certainly, from the beginning of the year till the end of it, morning, mid-day, and evening, it, along with

its fellows, is the means of supplying me with enjoyment, the measure of which cannot be told.

Well, one evening this year, the flowers of this shrub being in full blow, my household were at family worship, and I was reading aloud the evening portion of Scripture, near the window. Hearing the front gate open, I lifted my eye for a moment from the Bible, and saw a lad stooping towards the ground, near the rhododendron. Supposing he was some kind friend, that had taken the liberty of coming in, without warning, to put into the ground some beautiful flower for me, I just continued my reading, without thinking any more of the occurrence. But, next day, I saw that the object of the lad's visit had been the said rhododendron; for one of its branches, having a lovely flower on it, was rudely torn off, and its pretty appearance very much marred in consequence. Of course, I was grieved. But an excellent lesson was deepened in my mind; for I thought of the short-lived enjoyment (if he got any at all) the young man must have got from what he had stolen from my shrub, compared with the large and long-continued fund of enjoyment of which he had deprived me. "My lad," I said within myself, "that beautiful flower soon withered in your hand; and it is not unlikely that, before you reached home, last night, you threw the whole branch away; but, for the sake of that half hour's guilty pleasure, you have deprived me of one means of innocent delight for days, and months, and years; because it will be long before my rhododendron can look as well as it did." And then the lesson sank deep into my mind, that those who, in selfishness, deprive others of delights, inflict injury upon them much greater than any pleasure they get to themselves. Their own pleasure is both sinful and little, and of short duration; but the pain inflicted on others is considerable and lasting. Not a bad lesson, I think. I wish to learn it myself, and to see everybody else learning it.

In New York there has been formed a Young Men's Early Rising Association, all the members of which are pledged to be up at a certain hour. It originated with about half-a-dozen men, who having kept up this habit for some years, were surprised at its beneficial effects, and at the marked success in life of their associates.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"Our Father who art in heaven."—Matt. vi. 9.

I.

Two things in particular are necessary to acceptable prayer—confidence towards God, and a reverence of His holy name. Without a degree of confidence in His mercy, there would be no encouragement for prayer, but we should sink into despair. "He that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." And, "when ye pray, believe that ye receive, and it shall be given unto you." On the contrary, without reverence, our prayers would be little better than presumption. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in them that hope in His mercy."

The object of prayer is so represented in the instruction given us, as to excite both these sentiments in our approaches to His mercy-seat. To excite confidence He is called "our Father;" and to excite reverence He is said to be "in heaven."

God is the Father of all them that believe, in a sense distinct from that relation which He bears to us as our Creator. In this latter sense, He is the common Father of all living. The angels are called the "sons of God," when they shouted for joy at the erection of the world; and Adam, in reference to his creation, is called the "son of God." As creatures, therefore, it may be said of us, "Have we not all one Father; and hath not one God created us?" But the relation which the supreme Being bears to us as believers in Christ, is by adoption and grace; for we are by nature children of wrath, aliens and strangers from God, and heirs of destruction. We have lost the image of God, and are the children of the wicked one; if God now becomes our Father, and we are put among the children, it must be by adoption only, through Jesus Christ.

Adoption is a blessing which more especially belongs to the gospel dispensation, though it is not wholly confined to it. Believers are described as having received the spirit of adoption, and are thus contradistinguished from Old Testament saints, Gal. iv. 6. And God's people were never directed till now to say, "Our Father." Old Testament believers were interested in the national adoption, for to them it appertained as well as the giving of the law and the promises;

but they did not possess the spirit of adoption, being all their life time subject to bondage. The vail of the temple was not rent in twain till the death of Christ, nor the way into the holiest of all made plain; but now we cry, "Abba, Father."

The way in which God becomes our Father, is wholly through the mediation of Christ. The blessing is represented as being prepared for us from before the foundation of the world, but as being bestowed upon us merely for His sake, and in consequence of believing on His name. And we are all the children of God by faith which is in Christ Jesus. Ephes. i. 3—6. John i. 12.

Considering what we were by nature — aliens from God, and enemies by wicked works, in our sins and in our blood—how great is the divine condescension in forming this intimate and endearing connection with us. Had we never sinned, it would then have been wonderful that the most high God should become our Father. But behold what manner of love he hath bestowed upon us, that we should even now be called the sons of God.

Amidst this rich profusion of mercy, and, notwithstanding the holy familiarity to which we are now admitted, it becomes us still to remember that our Father is "in heaven," and that there His glory dwells. The filial love that is due to Him must be mixt with reverence and godly fear. He is in heaven and we are on earth; therefore let our words be few.

Our Father, being in heaven, denotes His universal presence, as well as His infinite majesty and glory; and the expression may be designed to teach us, that prayer is now everywhere to be offered up. Under the law the Jews were directed to look towards the temple as God's dwelling, and the place of His rest; but now He hath set His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom ruleth over all. There is no clime, no nation so remote, but the heavens overspread it, and it is equally near to our Father's throne: under the whole heavens, therefore, let Him be adored. All places are now alike sacred. Isaac prayed in the open fields, Abraham's servant at the side of a well, Asa amidst the tumult of a battle, Jonah in the whale's belly, Peter on the top of a house, and Jesus on a mountain. Wherever there is a heart to pray, the way to God is open; our Father is in heaven, and his ear is open to our cry.

How reasonable is it to hope that He will supply all our need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus; and that there is

nothing too great for Him to bestow upon His children. On whom should a Father bestow His love? If He care not for them, for whom should he provide? If He open His hand to satisfy the desire of every living thing, much more will He fulfil the desire of them that fear Him. This idea is beautifully expressed more than once by our blessed Lord, and it may well encourage us in all our approaches to the mercy seat. Matt. vi. 30—34., vii. 9—11.

If God be our Father He will sympathise with us in all our afflictions. If a father's heart be not touched with the sorrows of a child, what can be expected to affect it? But we may be assured that in all our affliction He Himself is afflicted; and that in His love, and in His pity, He will redeem us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him: for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are but dust.

There is no sin repented of but He will pardon, no iniquity but He can forgive in those He loves. If we have sinned, if we have departed from God, if we have grieved His Holy Spirit, let us instantly arise and go unto our Father, and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight. And if the prodigal return, will not the bowels of a Father yearn over him; will He not see him while yet a great way off, and run and fall on his neck, and embrace him? Yes; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. If God be our Father, the prophet asks, will He reserve His anger for ever; will He keep it to the end? Impossible. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

What encouragement to call upon our Father who is in heaven, and to cherish every filial affection towards Him! Should we not resemble Him too, in His paternal kindness, and in His readiness to forgive? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect. And as believers in Jesus are all the children of the living God, let them love us brethren, and see that they fall not out by the way.

Men, and women too, grow hard by living to themselves alone. With little or nothing exterior to disturb their emotional nature, their affections are apt to settle quietly around themselves and finally crystalize there.

MARIA THERESA AND HER CHILDREN.

Maria Theresa was the mother of 16 children, all born within 20 years. There is every reason to suppose that her naturally warm affection, and her strong sense, would have rendered her, in a private station, an admirable, an exemplary parent; and it was not her fault, but rather her misfortune, that she was placed in a situation where the most sacred duties and feelings of her sex became, in some measure, secondary. While her numerous family were in their infancy, the Empress was constantly and exclusively occupied in the public duties and cares of her high station; the affairs of Government demanded almost every moment of her time. The Court physician, Von Swietar, waited on her each morning at her levée, and brought her a minute report of the health of the princes and princesses. If one of them was indisposed, the mother, laying aside all other cares, immediately hastened to their apartment. They all spoke and wrote Italian with elegance and facility. Her children were brought up with extreme simplicity. They were not allowed to indulge in personal pride or caprice; their benevolent feelings were cultivated both by precept and example. They were sedulously instructed in the "Lives of the Saints," and all the tedious forms of unmeaning devotion, in which, according to the sincere conviction of their mother, all true piety consisted. A high sense of family pride, an unbounded devotion to the house of Austria, and to their mother, the Empress, as the head of that house, was early impressed upon their minds, and became a ruling passion, as well as a principle of conduct with all of them. We have only to glance back upon the history of the last fifty years to see the result of this mode of education. We find that the children of Maria Theresa, transplanted into different countries of Europe, carried with them their national and family prejudices; that some of them, in later years, supplied the defects of their early education, and became remarkable for talent and virtue; that all of them, even those who were least distinguished and estimable, displayed, occasionally, both goodness of heart, and elevation of character; and that their filial devotion to their mother, and what they considered her interests, was carried to an excess, which in one or two instances proved fatal to themselves.

"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work."

THE PEBBLE AND THE ACORN.

"I am a pebble! and yield to none!"
 Were the swelling words of a tiny stone:—
 "Nor time nor season can alter me;
 I am abiding while ages flee.
 The pelting hail and the drizzling rain
 Have tried to soften me, long, in vain;
 And the tender dew has sought to melt
 Or touch my heart, but it was not felt.
 There's none that can tell about my birth,
 For I'm old as the big, round earth.
 The children of men arise and pass
 Out of the world, like the blades of grass,
 And many a foot on me has trod,
 That's gone from sight and under the sod.
 I am a Pebble! but who art thou,
 Rattling along from the restless bough?"

The Acorn was shocked at this rude salute,
 And lay for a moment abashed and mute;
 She never before had been so near
 This gravelly ball, the mundane sphere;
 And she felt for a time at a loss to know
 How to answer a thing so coarse and low.
 But, to give reproof of a nobler sort,
 Than the angry look or the keen retort,
 At length she said, in a gentle tone,
 "Since it has happened that I am thrown
 From the lighter element where I grew,
 Down to another, so hard and new,
 And beside a personage so august,
 Abashed, I will cover my head with dust,
 And quickly retire from the sight of one
 Whom time, nor season, nor storm, nor sun,
 Nor the gentle dew, nor the grinding heel
 Has ever subdued or made to feel!"
 And soon in the earth she sunk away,
 From the comfortless spot where the Pebble lay.

But it was not long ere the soil was broke
 By the peering head of an infant oak.
 And, as it arose and its branches spread,
 The Pebble looked up, and, wondering, said,
 "A modest Acorn—never to tell

What was enclosed in its simple shell !
 That the pride of the forest was folded up
 In the narrow space of its little cup !
 And meekly to sink in the darksome earth !
 Which proves that nothing could hide her worth,
 And oh ! how many will tread on me
 To come and admire the beautiful tree,
 Whose head is towering towards the sky
 Above such a worthless thing as I !
 Useless and vain, a cumberer here,
 I have been idling from year to year.
 But never, from this, shall a vaunting word
 From the humbled Pebble again be heard,
 Till something without me or within
 Shall show me the purpose for which I've been."

THE FLOWER-POT GARDEN.

"God made the country, and man made the town," is the thoughtful saying of the great Christian poet, Cowper. And the love of country sights and scenes is so strong, that it continues with most people throughout life, though their lot may have been cast in great cities, far away from the pleasant fields.

But there is no reason whatever, that people living in London, or other great towns, should be deprived of all enjoyment of flowers. A very little ingenuity would enable every industrious, sober working man, to adorn his dwelling with a few of these "smiles of God's goodness." The writer well remembers a poor little cripple boy, who was fond of flowers. His parents lived in two top rooms of a house situated in a close, paved court, yet the windows of these two garrets were really beautiful to look at. In a row of blacking-bottles, the little boy grew some lovely pink and white hyacinths. The flowers were so fine and thick, that he had to make little supports for them of some old bonnet-wire ; as soon as these were over, he had some auriculas growing in cocoa-nut shells. Then some one gave him some slips of geraniums, and he reared them carefully in a wooden box, under some broken tumblers, that attracted the light, and kept out the cold, the broken part being just enough to give air to the plant. By and by, they grew so strong, that they had to be transplanted, and during the whole summer, there were the bright, rich geraniums, with their fine broad green leaves, freely flowering before the little garret windows. Now, what this poor boy did, surely might be done by any man or woman.—*British Workman.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE JUDGMENT OF UNBELIEVERS.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, FEB. 24TH, 1861,
BY THE HON. AND REV. B. W. NOEL, M.A.,
AT JOHN STREET CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW.

"And then he shall reward every man according to his works."—MATT. xvi. 27.

WHEN our Lord at his return shall have acquitted his own followers and accepted them, he will then turn to the miserable crowd of men and women on his left hand, and will give to each of them his own decision respecting their eternal state. That decision will be pronounced with absolute authority, and at the same time it will be perfectly just. He will judge the world in righteousness, and as he has told us himself, he will reward every man according to his works. This sentiment is several times repeated in the New Testament, by the authority of Jesus. We may be assured, whatever judgment will be pronounced will be given with the most discriminating exactness, according to the merits of each. By his authority, Paul has repeated this revelation of the future judgment. God will render, he tells us, "to every man according to his deeds. To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; but to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, for there is no respect of persons with God." This judgment will be given with the utmost impartiality towards sinners of every class, from the members of the most civilized nations, to the poorest and most untaught savages. Monarchs and slaves will be just the same before God. And this scene which was thus pictured by Paul, was also beheld in vision by John, and he has renewed the same statement, that the works of each man will exactly determine what his lot will be. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things that are written in the book, according to their works, and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every man, according to their works." No man need be the least afraid that he shall receive an unjust sentence. If a man can be sure that he merits no anger from God, he will never have any. Whatever sentence is pronounced upon any man, it will be in perfect justice. There will not be the least exaggeration or extravagance in the judgment that is pronounced. More than that, both the character of our Judge and the statements of his Word, authorize us to say that no man will receive less than justice—that is to say, he will receive the very least that is required by justice—not the most that justice would demand, but the least that it requires. That which alone is to be the material of the judgment, is the conduct that each has

The Mother's Magazine.—April, 1861.

pursued in this world. Many will have died ages before that judgment comes, but what happens after death is not brought into judgment. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, but nothing that is done after death will be judged. When a man is dead there is no opportunity of engaging in sin, nor has he any opportunity of influencing his sentence in any way. Nor would he have the disposition, by any good conduct, to do so even if he had the power, for there is no change in a man's character after he dies. The rich man and Lazarus will rise up at the judgment with as complete a difference between them as at the day on which they died, when the rich man was carried to torment and Lazarus rose to glory. It is that which is done in the body which will constitute the material for our judgment.

And in this we shall be judged according to the rule I have explained already, namely, the Word of God. No man's misguided conscience, no man's fancies guided by a corrupt heart—called conscience, sometimes—will be any guide. If it were so, men would always be ready to defend themselves, as they have already done, and continue to bring themselves within reach of salvation. God has repeatedly assured us that whatever has been said in the law and the prophets must be fulfilled; that not a jot nor a tittle shall pass from the law till all is fulfilled, in regard both to its penalties and its rewards. Every part will have its perfect accomplishment. Just as all that was spoken "by Moses and the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Jesus" must have its fulfilment, even so must all the rest that has been predicted in these books come to pass; and, consequently, the Word of God will be the rule by which we shall all be judged. Respecting the Old Testament Scriptures, Jesus has said the Scriptures cannot be broken, never will be altered; and, respecting his own words, he has said heaven and earth shall pass, but his own words shall not pass away. They shall all be in full force when the judgment scene takes place. The apostles have also testified to the same truth, for they spake the mind of Jesus. Paul has told us that "those who have sinned in the law will be judged by the law." Everyone of us will be tried by the law. James has therefore said to all Christian men as well as others, that we should so act as those that shall be judged by the law of liberty. We are not placed under the law to be condemned by it—thanks be to God. Before we knew Christ the rule was, "Obey or perish." We are not under the law any more, but the rule that God has given to guide his servants is the law of liberty, because it is the unfailing expression of perfect right, and therefore must remain the unfailing guide of human conduct. By that law, then, all men will that day, when they appear before the Lord Jesus Christ, receive their ultimate sentence. "He shall reward every man according to his works."

But if the law of God is to be the rule of judgment, some will say, "How will those be judged that never knew the law?"—Will they be judged for disobeying what they never knew? Certainly not. "Those that have sinned without law shall perish without law, and those that have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." All that have had the opportunity of knowing the law shall be brought to that test, and those that have not had the opportunity of knowing it will be tried by other tests. Now this includes all mankind. I would therefore say a few words respecting those vast numbers who will stand before the Lord Jesus that day, who, partly through our sin and our idleness, have never known the Saviour at all. The heathen will come before him in judgment that day. His Word distinctly assures us that all idolaters will be condemned—that they will be excluded from heaven, and have their part in the lake of fire. They will receive exactly what they deserve and no more. But the sin of idolatry is lamentably great. Paul has shown that every man's reason might

have guided him to the knowledge of one intelligent, wise, and good Creator: "For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." They are clearly seen by every man who will think, so that the heathen are without excuse. If therefore a man, instead of finding God by thinking of his works, loves the greatest abominations that have ever been invented—loves idols which are the personifications of every vice, and is dragged down by them to tenfold depravity beyond that in which he was born, that man is obviously unfitted for the glory of God and will be discarded because no unholy thing shall be admitted there. And if the heathen, in addition to this, neglect the teaching of nature, show their opposition to God—as, alas, they always do—by refusing to believe in him when they have the opportunity, and cling to their obscene idolatries, as the Hindoos have done for ages, they are still more without excuse. Bad as the Mahomedans are, they have loudly proclaimed the wickedness of idolatry for the last 1800 years, and yet to this day the Hindoos cling to obscene idolatries in preference. Why is it so? Because the heart is desperately wicked. And when, in addition to this, they live in corrupt habits as they always do when there is no check given to them by the gospel, Paul has explained the position of those miserable persons thus:—"When the heathen which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law"—that is to say speak the truth, act honestly and humanely—"These having not the law are a law to themselves." Why do they do these things but because they are right? and if so, Why do they violate them—aye a thousand times? Their doing them at all proves they know what is right, and their refusing to do them shows that they violate their consciences, and therefore Paul says—"Who show the work of the law written in their hearts; their consciences also bearing witness and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." That is what we are all tempted to do, and what the heathen undoubtedly do—they blame others for falsehood, for theft, for licentiousness and cruelty, and yet they do them themselves, and find excuses for them. Their minds have just enough of light to condemn them, and very dismal is the prospect which these poor heathen millions have when they shall stand before the Son of God.

On the other hand, the Mahomedans, of whom, perhaps, there are nearly two hundred millions now in the world, for whom we are doing almost nothing—these will have a very miserable prospect when they stand before Jesus in the day when he shall reward every man according to his works. They at least have known Jesus and have recognised him as a prophet, and therefore they should have been curious to learn his character and doctrines. And if what Paul has pronounced in his Master's name be true—"If any man love not the Lord Jesus let him be anathema"—what must be the condition of those when they stand before him who have been taught by their false prophet to hate him and his followers? See how they endeavoured in India to exterminate every Christian because their book taught them to hate them. See how they have been endeavouring, now, lately, on Mount Lebanon, joining with the Druses, to exterminate the Christians, just because their book taught them to hate them. In addition to this their religion has corrupted them and made them like their prophet—for men invariably grow like him whom they adore and follow. Their prophet was eminently cruel and licentious, and that character is given to all his religious followers. Everywhere the Mahomedans, excepting those who are better than their system, are cruel and licentious, and when these unholy men stand before the Lord Jesus what is the judgment that he must pronounce upon them, having declared beforehand by his servant that nothing that is defiled shall enter into the Celestial Kingdom?

The Jews also, who disbelieve in Jesus, have received very plain warning from God's holy word. They cannot but be condemned because they have no Saviour.

That they all merit condemnation God declares in his law, and it ought to be enough to make a Jew very thoughtful. If any man does not continue in all things that are written in that law he is accursed before God, as it is written "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written"—the apostle is quoting from Deuteronomy—"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." They who rise up in judgment under that law, will have an awful prospect. The Jew has no atonement to plead—he has none to make. And then, with reference to the Saviour, they denied him—denied because they did not love him, nor like his character, any more than their fathers did, and their fathers hated him because he was good. Respecting this disbelief of the Saviour, this is what we are told. Peter, when he was speaking to their fathers has spoken in fact to them "Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." That does not happen here, and therefore it must happen by-and-by. They will have to rise up in the judgment, and stand before Jesus whom they have despised, to account for how they have ill-treated their own Lord; and what God has said to them in the prophets, they will recognise as divine.

But our business to day is not with these large classes to whom we can bring no aid. We are disposed to turn our minds very much from afflictions which we cannot alleviate, though we are bound to make every effort in our power to instruct these numerous classes. But my brethren, we have to do with this judge ourselves; and of those who are under the law, and have the opportunity of knowing the will of God, Paul has said, "They who have sinned in the law, will be judged by the law." Now, this embraces all that are in this congregation, as well as all London, and all England. We may divide those that will stand up before Jesus in the judgment day, into three classes. There are those who, whatever their theological opinions are, are violating the law of God. They are disobedient, and will not do the things that God commands. Perhaps they do not know the Bible, but that was because they would not read it. They had the opportunity of knowing the law—every man in this country has the opportunity of knowing it some way or other, and therefore every man who breaks the law of God contained in that book, will have no excuse in the day when he receives judgment according to his works. The law is good, it comes with a divine sanction. Man would be the happier for obeying it. Why then do men break it? On this point our Lord is very distinct. By himself and his disciples, he has declared that which he will again declare, for it will be the substance of his judgment at the last day—the judgment upon all the wicked. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" Substantially Jesus will pronounce this sentence. You and I shall stand before him, and all other sinners in London, and in the world, and he will say "The unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God." He will then say "Depart from me all ye that work iniquity. And they that have done good shall rise to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." There is no other hope for them. There will be no servile flattery paid that day to the opinions of man. Jesus has told us what he will do, and he will do it. "The fearful and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." There is no other end for them, and that will be according to their works. Why did they break the law?

And not only those who have recklessly indulged their lusts and done much mischief to themselves and to others by that recklessness—not only must they be condemned, but all those whose disobedience to God's law in this way has been more "respectable" and more concealed—all who have lived and died in impenitent transgression, must come to this miserable end.

And with these there is another class that Jesus will judge no less that day. Our great business and duty in the world is to love our Maker with all our hearts. He is worthy of it—he has been our benefactor—he has been patient with us, and his perfections have been so clearly revealed, that it is the great business of our lives to love our God with all our hearts. Those who do so will be blessed indeed—"For eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him."

But if instead of loving him both for his excellencies and for his benefits to us, we live in ingratitude all our days, and love him not at all when we ought to love him primarily, and manifest that want of love to him by disregarding his will and dis-

pleasing him every day, then there is no help for it—we must be judged according to our works, and we are told what that judgment will be. “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness”—the term “ungodliness” does not mean injustice to man, or cruelty to our neighbours, but the want of right feeling towards God. Those that die in their sins, that is without right feeling towards God, are therefore the children of wrath, and when this judgment comes, and the Lord Jesus rewards every man according to his works, we are positively assured by Peter, on his authority, that that day will be the perdition of ungodly men. No ungodly man has any reason to hope for anything else. If he has been most amiable and virtuous—if he has done a thousand acts of kindness to his neighbours—if he has deserved and obtained the esteem and veneration of all his friends and associates, but has exercised no right feeling to his Maker, then the day of judgment is to him the day of perdition.

But when men have not only sinned against God's law, and lived without any right feeling to their Maker, but have added to this the contempt of the only remedy, and have rejected the only Saviour—what must be their doom? Consider what must befall the infidel in the day when Jesus rewards every one according to his works; what must befall him who openly rejected Jesus. Some of these carry their condemnation in their very tempers, in the malignity of their hearts towards the very name and authority of Jesus as well as his disciples. Poor Voltaire will have to stand before Jesus that day, and will have to answer for his malignity of heart, which was shown in those fearful words *Ecrassez l'infame!*—“Curse the wretch”—which he uttered against the Saviour. Jesus has said what he means to do respecting all such in the parable, where he says, “Those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them.” That is their reward according to their works.

But suppose a man is much more philosophical and thoughtful in temper and gentle in disposition, yet, if he is an infidel he will have to give an account to God when he stands before him. Jesus has expressed in a few words what that man's lot and the reason of it will be. Let us recal them. “He that believeth on him is not condemned”—he is not even judged—but he that believeth not is condemned already.” There are many men who seem to think that infidelity will be a shelter; that because they did not believe they will not be judged by the truths they deny. How utterly will they be mistaken! How confused, when they find out what led to their condemnation! “He that believeth not on Jesus is condemned already”—and to that Jesus will they have to give account—“because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” These two things constitute the responsibility of every man, and I hope and trust no man here will have to rise to give an account of this sin, at all events, to the Lord. If we have sufficient opportunities of knowing, and if we have sufficient capacity to understand, then we are responsible in the sight of God. Now there is no man of ordinary capacity in this country who has not the evidence set before him, or who might not have. Why then is he condemned? “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.” I heard a young acquaintance of mine arguing only two days ago—one who has sunk into complete, reasoning, thoughtful, active, infidelity—a very clever young man; but step by step as he has fallen into infidelity he has plunged into vice—open, reckless vice—and the two things are married together very naturally. He wants to protect his conscience from the accusations that it brings against his vices, and the natural result is for him to say that all the truths that condemn him are falsehoods. So, he abuses a fine intellect in order effectually to perpetuate the darkness because he hates the light, for “every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.” Remember that these remarks of Jesus are very extensive in their application. They do not relate solely to the vices of men, but to every opposition to truth and goodness which there is in the human heart. But all who disbelieve will come before that judge who has determined what he means to do that day. He has ordered his servants to go and preach the good news of salvation to every creature on the earth. He has given the good news, with abundant evidence as to their truthfulness, to men, and they ought to find a welcome in every mind and heart. And as Jesus has said “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”—that is, he that believeth and becomes openly my disciple shall be saved—and he that believeth not shall be damned—he will never depart from that sentence. Whatever the criminals may think of that sentence it will be certain. It will be perfectly clear to all minds, and though the criminal should say it is unjust that will only add to his condemnation. There will be perfect justice in every sentence our Maker utters. The most active scrutiny for ages will never detect the least flaw either in its justice or its benevolence; and if the infidel hopes that his allegations will secure a trium-

phant verdict that day he is miserably mistaken. It will be an awful thing for a man to stand before Jesus as a careless infidel even if he be not a malignant one.

But if the Lord Jesus has determined this respecting the infidel, then false disciples will have no reason to applaud their condition. A false disciple is one that does not see his need of a Saviour by owning his desert of punishment—one who does not believe that Jesus the Lord died for him, in his place, to take away his guilt. A false disciple is one that does not believe that the Lord has wrought out a full atonement for his soul. A false disciple is one who does not believe that if he trust in Jesus he is saved, and that if he trust not in Jesus he will perish. A false disciple is one who cannot believe that Jesus is able and willing to save him, and therefore does not trust him. Now all these, as much as open and avowed infidels, do not believe the things which are essential to be believed: they do not credit the testimony God has given of his Son: they do not believe the Bible. They profess to believe and yet they are unbelievers still.

Now there are four classes of those that will stand before the Lord Jesus for judgment, amongst others, of whom I will speak a few words—oh that none of you dear brethren may be found amongst them. Amongst those who bear the Christian name, there are those exactly described by our Lord and Saviour in the parable of the Marriage Feast, as making light of salvation, and going to their farms and their merchandise with an engrossing affection. Alas, how many there are who make light of salvation. Every man makes light of salvation who does not receive it, when he will not be saved by Jesus. If a man will not search the Word of God and reflect upon it he makes light of salvation. If a man is told that the Spirit of God is offered to help and teach those that ask for it, and he never ask for it, that is making light of salvation. If a man gives Sabbath after Sabbath to the merest trifles: if he amuses himself with miscellaneous literature during those precious hours that are thus secured to him, and by no management of his, from business and labour, and which might be given to obtaining a knowledge of salvation—that man is slighting it. If a man will systematically turn from the most earnest preaching because it offends and wounds his feelings, then he is making light of salvation: and he who goes where he may be flattered and where his soul may be sent fast asleep, is making light of salvation. Now Jesus has alluded to all these when he said, "They are not worthy"—or as he has said in another parable, "These men shall not taste of my supper." It is most just that they shall not have that which they despised. Their judgment has already been pronounced in his name by one of His servants—"If the word spoken by angels were steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall ye escape who have neglected so great salvation?" It will be perfectly just that those men should lose salvation who have not taken the least pains to secure it. Do not stand amongst them, dear hearers.

In the same parable our Lord describes another class—unfortunately also a very large class. He speaks of a man in parabolic language as wishing to sit down at the feast and coming into the palace wearing his own clothes and not the robes prepared by royal bounty. Everything was prepared for him: the palace, the feast, the invitation, the robes, were all a free gift, and he might have sat down at the feast and be welcome, but he chose to come in his own garments instead. I have not now time to bring before you the passages to prove it, but these robes undoubtedly mean the righteousness which the Lord Jesus has secured for us through his atoning sacrifice, so that if a man refuses that righteousness and prefers to trust to his own, he is warned by that parable that he must necessarily be shut out from the happiness that he would not enjoy because he would not seek it in God's way. Here is the account of that very temper and mind given by the Apostle Paul. "The heathen which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." They have been accounted righteous before God through believing. These wicked men, these depraved and immoral heathens in numbers have come to this righteousness. Publicans, and sinners, and harlots, and all kinds of vile characters have received this righteousness humbly because they saw they had none of their own, and they have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; but Israel—religious Israel—the religious people of the land—the self-respected, upright, moral, virtuous—they who showed great regard for religion—they who followed after the law of righteousness, "have not attained to the law of righteousness." Wherefore? "Because they sought it not by faith but as it were by the works of the law. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish as it were their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." This is going on every day, and many there are that will not submit to the righteousness of God, but prefer their own righteousness, and affront God by supposing that their own works can be an atonement for sin, or merit his favour, or give them a claim to

eternal life at the same time that they are treating with contempt the real ground of acceptance which God has provided for them in Jesus—despising his righteousness, and despising the holiness which the Spirit of God gives to man through Jesus—and so coming with all their imperfect and, for the most part, most worthless acts, to present to God as something better than the righteousness of Jesus. When he renders to every man according to his works what will he have to say to such? "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." There is no other sentence for them. Jesus has positively revealed beforehand what he means to pronounce upon this class. "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Now Jesus has declared he means to say so. It is far better, therefore, for a man to submit to the decision of his judge beforehand than vainly to hope, either to argue against it, or to resist it if he cannot argue.

And now we come to another large class of those who are false disciples bearing the Christian name—perhaps denying none of the doctrines of the gospel, but owning all that the infidel impugns; glorying perhaps in their orthodoxy—but who live simply to serve themselves. When the Lord Jesus died for us he bought us to be his own; and this is the statement that the apostle has made in his name—a statement which applies to every one of us here. He that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. "Ye are bought with a price." Now, that is our true condition. Every man who has the opportunity of listening to the gospel is, by the fact of the Lord's death for him, made his servant. "Ye are bought with a price." Now, some may own that and call themselves servants of Christ, and yet live to please themselves. God has given them, perhaps, great gifts. They may have estates and honours, large wealth and great faculties, and much knowledge and affection; they may have plenty of leisure, rank, influence, everything that could be useful to their fellow creatures, and yet all they do is to grasp as much of enjoyment in this world as they can. All their time and thought are employed in obtaining everything which can gratify them, while they do nothing for him whom they call their Master. They never converted one soul; they never spoke to a man about being saved; never prayed with the unconverted; never used their influence, their money, their time, their rank, which are all Christ's, to make the world better or wiser; never tried to bring the lost to salvation. Well, Jesus has said of such, that when he rewards every man according to his works, he must in justice say, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Cast every man that is useless; that has done nothing for me, though he owned I was his Master; who did nothing but please himself all through his life; boasting perhaps of his virtues, glorying in his gifts, but doing nothing for me: cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.

A still severer sentence is reserved for the fourth class. Since the Lord Jesus has bought us with his blood the least we owe him is an undying gratitude. If we are bought to be his servants it is not to pay him a reluctant service, but a living service. We owe it to Jesus that we should love him best of all, and he tells us that if we do not love him best of all we are not worthy of him. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Now there are some that do love the Lord; and if these who do love him and obey him, and study his word, and stand up for his authority, and promote his honour, are despised and disliked, do those who despise and dislike them love him? For instance, when Saul was trying to murder as many of the Christians as he could, would it have been of any use if he had said "I love Jesus." He tried to murder every follower of Jesus; he dragged men and women from their homes to prison; he had them publicly scourged, and gave his vote against them when they were condemned to death. Would it have been any use for him to say "I love their Master—I love Jesus?" It would have been a manifest contradiction. The fact was that he hated them because he hated Jesus. Now, if a man shows the same temper towards Christians in these days, then it is in vain for that man to say he is a Christian, and that he loves the Saviour. He loves him not; his hatred of these shows his dislike and neglect towards Jesus. When, therefore, he comes again, he will ask of every man whether he loved him. There is that plain statement "If any man loves not the Lord Jesus let him be anathema." The man that claimed to be a Christian and who showed by his want of love to Christ's followers that he did not love Christ, must be "anathema" that day—an accursed thing. And to all those who showed that they did not love him, as you may see in Matt. xxv., by not loving his disciples, he will say "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." You did not love my servants; you therefore did not love me, and you must be shut up in the prison of the lost.

But my dear friends, though these classes have a bad prospect before them, let us remember that these remarks extend to every one here. We may not be among

those classes very distinctly, but every one of every class who does not serve, love, obey, and trust the Son of God is condemned already. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." That one passage is quite enough to condemn us; not to trust in Jesus the Saviour is sufficient to remove from us all hopes of everlasting happiness. Do not be mistaken, my dear brethren, Jesus is true, and if Jesus is to be your judge, that one sin will be your destruction. In that solemn moment when all the wicked of every class shall stand before the Lord Jesus, and when each has received his doom—when that great crowd of the redeemed and saved begin to ascend with their King and Saviour up to their abodes in glory; and when that other and dreadful assemblage, seized by an irresistible power, is hurled by the ministers of Christ's justice, to that dreadful prison that is waiting to receive them, and where Jesus has told us there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth—can you not imagine just as they are sinking to that dreadful prison, what a universal wail will rend the air. It must have been an awful thing for Noah to see the lost world perishing one after another; to see them dropping into that rising flood from the summits of the hills, or from the branches of the high trees, or from the lofty rocks; to see the crowds of despairing men and women, with shrieks and imprecations falling into that avenging flood. But that sight was nothing compared with what your eyes will see, when a much greater number shall sink to a much more awful doom—shall begin their dreadful passage from earth, convoyed by resistless angels, to the prison of the lost. Can you imagine the dreadful wail there was when the earth closed its jaws over Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their ruined families? But what will be the wail when hell closes her mouth upon the miserable victims of their own folly and sin.

Now, is there any one here whom the thought of that undoubted fact makes anxious. Does it cause you one apprehension my dear friend? Do you think of this coming doom with a burden on your spirit because you are unconverted, and unpardoned, and unsaved? Then, I say, in the name of Jesus, get rid of that anxiety by being saved. If it may well make a thoughtful man anxious to know this is coming and must come, then does it not become you in the name of God to get rid of your anxiety by being saved? Remember what the same Almighty Sovereign and Eternal Judge has said respecting the sin of unbelief. If you see your sin and your guilt, turn to Jesus and you are safe. He has assured you that he is not willing that you should perish—not that one should perish—but that all should come to repentance. He does not will the destruction of any unbeliever here. He invites you to be saved. He tells you to come to him and be saved. He assures you that if you do come and surrender yourself to him, taking his yoke, you are saved. He is able and willing to save you to the uttermost, and, being able and willing, he asks you to trust him for salvation. He assures you that if you do trust him for salvation you are not condemned—you shall not come into condemnation—you have passed from death unto life. The moment you trust in Jesus you become a child of God, and as soon as you are a child of God you are an heir of heaven—possessed of that inheritance by an indefeasible right—and you are safe. You entered within these walls a condemned creature, unprepared for the judgment seat, and certain to be destroyed if that judgment dawned upon you; but you may go forth from these walls rescued. God asks nothing of you that you cannot bring. He asks no merit—no righteousness—no works—nothing but what at this moment you can bring him. You can bring him trust in Jesus and the confession of your sin. He asks nothing more, and if you bring that to him before this day closes then you are saved from that awful judgment. God grant, my dear hearer, that this very Sabbath, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, you may shout out your triumph before men and angels "I am saved from hell, I am an heir of heaven."

Sketches and Essays.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SANITARY KNOWLEDGE.

HERE there is work for women of all ranks—work to which every woman should lend her hand, and aid to the utmost of her power. Not only is it necessary that she should be able to keep her house in a healthy condition, but that she should be able to bring up healthy children.

But is the English matron qualified to do this? Has she been fitted for it by previous education? Is her own health such as to give to others confidence in her knowledge of the laws of health? Alas, no. Her attention has never been directed to these important points, and too frequently the state of her own health gives sure indications of the neglect of sanitary measures. The ill-health of English women has become almost proverbial. Each succeeding generation is found to be less strong—to use a mild form of expression—than the preceding. Why should this be so? Why should it be a fact, that although the duration of life is now longer than it was, there should be more ill-health? The cause is probably to be looked for in the habits of the people; and it is not too much to suppose that the consequences of these habits may be traceable in their descendants.

Did space permit, it would be interesting to take a brief retrospective view of society in England, and endeavour to trace the influence of physical circumstances upon the health of successive generations.

It would, for instance, be easy to see the causes of the plagues which formerly, at uncertain intervals devastated this country, in the close and undrained streets, in the low-pitched, unventilated rooms, the rush-strewn floor, and the want of personal cleanliness in the people. Even in the time of James I., it is related, that when the handsome George Villiers was sent up to London for the purpose of superseding the Earl of Somerset in the king's favour, the queen, who introduced him to the king, first prepared him, for presentation, by *perfuming* his person—a bath would, no doubt, have more effectually accomplished the object she had in view.

The Mother's Magazine, May. 1861.

It would also be easy to trace the agues and low fevers, from which even royalty was not exempt, to the undrained marshes, and the low situations of dwelling-houses, especially those of the gentry, which for greater security, were often surrounded by a moat filled with water. Owing to the inability of procuring fresh provisions during many months of the year, and the consequent use of salted meats, the scurvy once prevailed in this country to a great extent. The improvements in agriculture have almost exterminated this dreadful disease, as the draining of marshes and filling up of moats have greatly diminished agues.

The same remarks apply to a still more terrible disease, the leprosy of Scripture, which, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, devastated Europe, and is generally supposed to have been introduced from the East by the Crusaders. So general was this plague of leprosy, that almost every town of note at that period had its Lazar-house, without the gates, where those afflicted with the disease were compelled to live and die.

All these causes no doubt affected, to a considerable degree, the health of the community; but in the middle of the seventeenth century, the dissolute morals and intemperance of the Royalists and the habit of drunkenness which pervaded all classes—even as recently as the reign of George III., perhaps it may be said as the Regency—exercised a material influence upon the national health. This was a period when people delighted in hunting, racing, and all kinds of robust sports; and it has been remarked that the diseases then prevalent were brief and acute in their nature, and frequent blood-letting was considered necessary; indeed, during the early part of the present century it was a common practice among country people to be bled every spring. “As late,” says a medical friend, a strenuous advocate for sanitary reform, “as the year 1836, I remember myself bleeding several persons, both towns-people and country people, at their own wishes, in the spring, for no disease.”

Since the commencement of the present century, medical men have observed that the character of the prevalent diseases has altered; that the same treatment is no longer applicable, and that the symptoms accompanying them are those of debility. Can this occasion surprise, when we reflect that the drunkard and the dissolute are known to have sickly offspring? Of a truth, the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, even to the third and fourth generation.

With regard to the female part of the community, fashion, so early as the reign of William II., had introduced the pernicious practice of using stiff, and frequently tight stays. Yet, in spite of the pressure they exercised on the internal organs, and the weakening of the muscles of the trunk, the women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—not to go back to a more remote date—were much more robust than their descendants of the present day. The reason is to be found in their habits of daily life. During the period alluded to, ladies took an active part in household affairs. Not only was the kitchen, the bakery, the brewhouse, and frequently the dairy, under their especial superveillance, but the thread for the family linen was spun in the house, stockings were knitted, and many other domestic operations were carried on in private houses, which the division of labour incident to the present day, has transferred to towns. The life of a matron of those times was an active one. Besides the management of the house, she could dress wounds, prescribe after the fashion of the day for the common diseases of the country, and she could distil essences and strong waters. The means of locomotion then in use contributed to render the Englishwoman robust. Carriages were rare, and where walking was out of the question, the common mode of travelling was on horse-back, either on a side-saddle, or on a pillion, behind a male member of the family, or a groom. Even as recently as the year 1825, this mode of travelling was common in the country districts of Devonshire; the squire would ride to church with his little girl in front of him, and his wife on a pillion behind, holding fast to her husband by a leather belt. Formerly, also, the wives and daughters of farmers would rise with the lark, and carry on horse-back the butter they had churned, or the poultry they had reared, to a distant market-town, whence they would return in the evening with well-lined pockets, and panniers filled with shop goods.

Generally speaking, our female ancestors were not much given to book-learning. The Bible, the family receipt-book (in which specifics for prevalent diseases alternate with directions for the composition of dainty dishes, fit to set before a king), the *Whole Duty of Man*, with, perhaps, a volume or two of Sermons, constituted their library. The recreation of dancing was common to all classes: music was limited to the wealthy.

During the first half of the present century, little, growing girls

and young women might be seen seated on rigid forms, without backs, for many hours every day, in badly-ventilated school-rooms; their supple frames were encased in tight, stiff stays, made with shoulder straps; their dresses cut low in the neck; hence, when they tried to ease their tortured frames by slipping out one shoulder from its confinement of straps, or by standing on one foot, the muscles of the back, weakened by want of use, were insufficient to support the spine in its proper position, and lateral curvature took place, followed in many cases by irretrievable bad health. While boys were allowed all kinds of physical exertion, girls were taught that active movements were unladylike; they were to be quiet and graceful, not to romp like boys. Sedentary pursuits were encouraged—they grew up delicate in health, and frequently deformed in person. Great stress was laid upon the attainment of accomplishments of little or no use in the active business of life, while no instruction was given as to the functions of life, or the means of preserving the body in health.

Such was, and is too frequently, the routine of school discipline. When the girl leaves school, matters are not much mended. If she marry, she too often enters upon life with indolent and luxurious habits, and an enfeebled constitution, and brings into the world children, whom, from physical causes, she is frequently incapable of nursing. The young wife is also generally quite ignorant of the proper management of infants. I have heard more than one young mother state that the first infant she ever saw undrest was her own.

I appeal to the reader to decide whether a woman so circumstanced is fit to be entrusted with the bringing up of an infant. But this is a subject of so deep importance, so wide in its comprehensive bearings, that I dare not attempt to deal with it in the space to which I am limited.

The more robust health of the working classes must be understood only as applying to those who lead active lives—a very large proportion of them. At the same time it must be mentioned, that the long school hours and sedentary habits, now usual in parochial and village schools, are producing upon the children of the lower orders the same ill-effects as they have produced upon the females of the classes above them. Almost all these children, from seven years old and upward, wear ready-made stays, stiff with whalebone as a coat of mail. They grow up pale and delicate, with narrow chests, small

waists, flaccid muscles, and a tendency to hysteria. Happily for them, they are often removed from school at the age of twelve or fourteen, and placed in domestic service. If they are fortunate enough to get good places, wholesome food and plenty of exercise frequently restore them to robust health; and so, in time, they marry and become healthy mothers of children. One shudders to think what sufferings must be the lot of delicate girls apprenticed to the sedentary employment of dress-making, or whose feeble powers are overtaxed by hard work, long hours, and, perhaps, insufficient food.

I have thus endeavoured to show the necessity of sanitary knowledge, especially to women. I have also shown how circumstances and habits, apparently remote, may have an influence, for good or for evil, upon the health of successive generations, and have pointed out some of the causes which may have induced the ill-health so generally ascribed to Englishwomen. I would now earnestly impress upon the women of England the urgent necessity of themselves taking measures to restore their own health, and to bring up healthy children; bearing ever in mind the sage maxim, that prevention is better than cure. Let them earnestly seek and obtain that knowledge of the laws of life and health which shall enable them to discharge conscientiously the sacred duty they owe to their families. I am aware that a prejudice existed formerly—I hope it exists no longer—against women acquiring such knowledge. It was considered not only unnecessary, but improper. It might have been added, that there was a want of works calculated to convey to women the information they required without being mixed up with the description and treatment of diseases and unnecessary technicalities. Now, however, this want has been fully supplied: many excellent and cheap works on physiology and the vital functions have been issued, and there is no longer any excuse for ignorance on these important subjects. The question of the impropriety of such studies by women has long been disposed of. Years ago, Dr. Southwood Smith had said, “I look upon that notion of delicacy which would exclude women from knowledge calculated in an extraordinary degree to open, exalt, and purify their minds and to fit them for the performance of their duties, as alike degrading to those to whom it affects to show respect, and debasing to the mind that entertains it.”

The timid, and perhaps the indolent also, shrink from these studies, fearing to incur the charge of being “strong-minded women.”

Strange, if what ought to be a recommendation, should be a term of reproach!

That is truly a weak, not a strong-minded woman, who casting off the reserve of her sex, affects the dress and manners of men. The really strong-minded woman, knowing her own place in society, and conscious of her responsibilities, will never fall into such errors. Her strength consists in daring to do all that doth become a woman.

This is the woman whose own works shall praise her; whose children shall rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her!

HER SILENCE SAVED ME.

I REMEMBER (said a young man) being in company with several thoughtless girls. Among them, however, there was one exception;—a serious, quiet, and beautiful woman, whose religious opinions were well known, and whose pen had for a long time spoken eloquently in the cause of truth and virtue through the columns of our village paper. Suddenly I conceived the thought of bantering upon religious subjects, and with the fool-hardiness of youth, and the recklessness of impiety, I launched forth with some stale infidel objections that none but “the fool who saith in his heart there is no God,” would venture to reiterate. The flock of silly goslings about me laughed and tittered, and I, encouraged by their mirth, grew bold, and repeated my inuendoes, occasionally glancing slyly towards the principal butt of all my amusement. She did not seem to notice me at all; she did not smile, did not look away, did not look at me.

Still I continued my impious harangue, thinking that she must refute something, that she would not surely hear her own holy faith held up to ridicule by a beardless boy. Those around me gradually began to glance towards her. Her face was so quiet, so even solemn in its quiet, that seriousness stole over them; and I stood alone, striving by my own senseless laughter to buoy up my fast sinking courage.

Still she never spoke, nor smiled—scarcely moved; her immobility grew awful; I began to stutter—to pause, to feel cold and strange—I could not tell how. My courage oozed off; my heart grew faint—I was conquered.

That night after I went home, in reflecting over my fool-hardy adventure, I could have scourged myself. The sweet angelic countenance of my mute accuser came up before me even in the visions of the night; I could not sleep. Nor did I rest, till, some days after, I went to the home of the lady I had insulted, and asked her pardon. Then she spoke to me,—how mild! how Christianly! how sweetly!

I was subdued, melted down; and it was not long after, that I became, I trust, a humble Christian, and looked back to my miserable unbelief with horror.

Her silence saved me. Had she answered with warmth, with sarcasm, with sneer, or with rebuke, I should have grown stronger in my bantering, and more determined in my opposition. But she was silent, and I felt as if my voice was striving to make itself heard against the mighty words of an omnipotent God. Oh, how often would it be better, if, instead of vain argument or hot dispute, the Christian would use the magic of silence—utter silence!

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH THE WORLD.

~~THERE~~ will arise, in the Christian's course, from time to time, many occasions on which he will be in doubt as to some points of his duty, especially in the case of social intercourse with the world, and of a participation in its amusements and recreations. Of course, in very many cases, his duty will be plain—i.e., if he be honest, sincere, and consistent. And perhaps the experienced Christian will seldom find any difficulty. I aim now rather at the case of the newly-awakened, the inquiring Christian. Well, in such cases he turns to his CHART; and on that chart (his BIBLE) though he finds not every rock, an l shoal, and quicksand marked down by name, he finds it laid down plainly and decisively that the whole coast is dangerous. In plainer words, he finds a general principle, though perhaps not in so many words, a specific statute—and that principle is, "Be not conformed to this world." "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." By whom is the amusement in question patronised? Whose equipages throng the door? Who make up the crowds that frequent it? Are they those who are the votaries of other and less dubious pleasures? Are they those who wear the world's badge and have

its mark stamped on their foreheads? Then let the Christian pause—let him fear to find himself surrounded by crowds of worldlings, sympathising in their pleasures, joining in their laughter, drinking with them of the same cup. It must be at best but a suspicious cup, that meets tastes which should be opposite; it must be at best but a suspicious path, in which, even for a moment, the Christian walks hand in hand with the man of this world. Be quite sure of this—the world would not be drinking of that cup, if it were not in some way spiced to their taste. Alas! it is far more likely that the Christian should have stepped out of his narrow path, than that the worldling should have forsaken his, to walk, even for a moment, with the Christian.

NOT SEEKING MINE OWN PROFIT.

A NOBLE sentiment this of the apostle Paul, and one the adoption of which allied him in spirit with the Lord Jesus, who never paused to consult his own personal comfort or happiness in his wonderful interposition for our salvation.

To the world this is a strange, an inexplicable principle of conduct. It is a negation that undermines all wise rules of life. All prudent worldly maxims, are directly the reverse of this. "Take care of yourself first;" see to it diligently that all your own personal interests are primarily subserved; study, toil, grasp, hold, that you may gain and keep all that you can wrench from the world; make yourself the centre of the universe, and gather within the narrow circumference, round which your own hand can sweep, everything you can attract from the most distant points;—this is the spirit of all the maxims of worldly prudence.

And even in the church of Christ, it seems a hard lesson to learn that we are to live primarily for the cause of Christ, for the good of mankind, to "seek *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness." "Where were you, my brother, on the week evening, when the people of God met together to pray?"

"Where? 'seeking mine own profit,' to be sure."

"And where on the bright Sabbath morning, when children were waiting for instruction in the Sabbath school, and the disciples of Christ were gathering for His worship?"

"Recovering my energies, that during the week I might the more efficiently 'seek mine own profit.'"

"Where were you when our brethren met together to consult and contribute for some benevolent work?"

"'Seeking mine own profit,' by staying away."

Thus might we traverse all the claims to consecration, energy, and benevolence, which the gospel and the needs of humanity urge, and find some of you answering to all,—“I am 'seeking mine own profit.'”

According to the spirit by which many professing Christians are governed, Paul might have been a very creditable professor of religion, and yet have amassed large wealth, or become a prominent professional man, for he had commanding talents and a thorough education. Had he directed his energies mainly to the securing of his own personal interest—giving a little of his earnings now and then—filling his place among the disciples with tolerable punctuality and heartiness, he might have stood very fair in the church, and risen to eminence in the world. But no! he preferred usefulness in the church to eminence in the world. He strove to do good rather than to grow rich. How different from his spirit—not simply different in degree, but in essential character—is the spirit of many in the church! On many a Christian's sign-board it might be printed, over each page of blotter, day-book, and ledger, written,—“Seeking mine own profit.”

God has ordained that through the influence—the active, positive influence—of his ransomed people, the world shall be renewed. Every effort they make, every prayer they offer, every contribution they give, is aiding this glorious consummation. Every drop of rain that trickles down the hill-side swells the rill with which it mingles, and augments its momentum; so every particle of Christian influence enters into combination with the swelling streams that are flowing for the renewal and purifying of our race. That stream flows more tardily, my brother, and is less efficacious where it comes, from the want of your contribution to its volume and force. God is combining all individual influences, and directing them to the securing of one grand result. Is your spiritual influence, all of which you are capable, placed at His disposal? There is needed a large multiplication of such Christians as Paul, “who seek not their own profit.” Are you one of them? Will you be?

THE CHURCH CLOCK'S MESSAGE TO THOSE AROUND.

PEOPLE very often use words without thinking of their meaning, and still more frequently without a thought of their derivation. Few who name the month of January ever bestow a thought upon its origin, or call to mind the double-visaged god in whose honour it received its title. Nevertheless, spurn not to learn a lesson from the old heathen—a lesson of retrospection on the one hand, and of forethought and prayerful resolve on the other. As each period of time wings its flight onwards, and passes for ever from your grasp, look back upon your employment of its opportunities, the benefit you have derived from its lessons; and look forward to that future which is dawning upon you, seeking grace to employ it to the end for which it was bestowed.

Now as of old the idolatrous worship paid to Janus marked the end of a lengthened period of time, so am I employed to declare the flight of shorter periods, and to proclaim to the multitudes around me the rapid lapse of that most precious gift—Time.

Placed as I am, so remote from men as they pursue their accustomed way, my voice can only be heard when I greatly exert it, ninety-six times in the twenty-four hours. The faint whisper which I utter every moment is inaudible to the multitudes below. And is there no lesson to be learnt from this? I think there is. How many seconds slip away unperceived, and glide into minutes, which again swell imperceptibly, until my warning voice announces that an hour has passed away! How many plead as an excuse for indolence or indulgence, "It is only a minute!" But how seldom is that minute adhered to! The one gradually lengthens into five or ten, and thus hours of precious time—of golden worth—are wasted and squandered. This recalls to me an instance in which "Only a minute" led to serious and painful results.

In a richly furnished apartment, I once watched two girls, just merging into womanhood. The elder, reclining on a sofa, bore tokens of disease and suffering; whilst the younger, seated by her side strove, by lively conversation, to cheer the drooping spirits of the invalid. Presently she quitted the room, her sister having fallen into a light slumber, and soon reappeared at a window in another part of the house. She gazed idly into the street, and, yawning wearily, was turning away, when a new novel caught her eye; and, flinging her-

self upon a sofa, she began to devour its contents. "Only a minute," she said, but she sat on and on, until nearly an hour had elapsed.

In the meantime, I witnessed a terrible scene in the sick girl's chamber. During her sleep, a spark had flown from the fire and alighted on her dress, which was instantly in a blaze. Unable, from mingled weakness and terror, to rise, and the bell not being within reach, she could only endeavour to attract attention by loud and convulsive screams. But these failed to reach her sister's ear in the distant library.

Moved at the sight, I exerted my voice to the utmost, and struck my bell as loud as possible, in the hope that its reverberations might arouse the careless novel reader. They did so. Starting up hastily, Clara Mansfield quitted the apartment, alarmed to find she had been so long absent from her sister. But when she reached the sick chamber, what a scene presented itself! The invalid, by means of a heavy shawl, had temporarily repressed the flames; but they were now bursting forth with renewed violence, and the couch on which she lay seemed a mass of fire. Assistance was immediately procured, and the flames were extinguished; but the youthful sufferer never rallied. A few days she lingered in intense agony, and then the closed shutters, the darkened windows, and, later, the mourning coaches, and the hearse with its waving plumes, proclaimed that she had gone to her long home, that "the silver cord was loosed, and the golden bowl broken."

Oh, take care of the minutes! Never waste one because it is *only one*. How do you know but *that one* may be your *last*?

The inhabitants of the luxurious mansions which lie spread beneath one of my faces, seem occupied with the endeavour to turn night into day. In the early morning hours, when all elsewhere is hushed to rest, the deep and solemn stillness is here broken by rolling wheels and moving vehicles; and the pure, still, lunar rays are harshly rebuked by the brilliant lights which shine through the ample window panes. It seems to me as though the "lesser light which ruleth the night" shrank timidly before this usurpation, and shone less brightly here than on the humbler quarters around.

And to what purpose is the night thus wrested from its legitimate use? Were you in my place, you might hear the idle song, the light jest, the noise of mirth, feasting, and merriment, the strains of music and dancing. And you might perceive airy forms, clothed in brilliant

apparel, and fair faces, their beauty glowing with intenser brilliancy under the intoxicating excitement of the hour. And wherefore is all this? What object animates the hearts beating beneath these joyous countenances? Pleasure! Yes, pleasure is the phantom which they are ceaselessly pursuing; in their eager desire after which, multitudes seek to satisfy, with the miserable husks of this vain world, that earnest longing, that intense yearning after something, which nothing but Infinity can satisfy; forgetful of Him in "whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

I am here reminded of Marian Courtney, who resided formerly in one of these stately mansions. Evening after evening I gazed upon her, as, like a lovely vision, she entered the carriage which was to convey her to some place of amusement. But as months passed on, a change took place; she grew thin and weak, and the transparent complexion and fleeting colour told of the ravages of disease within. Soon the physician's carriage was at the door, and I saw the fair creature no more, until, unable to bear the fatigue of walking, she was borne to the carriage, to pass the remainder of her life in a warmer and more genial clime. Alas! Marian Courtney's case does not stand alone.

(To be Continued.)

ANTICIPATED TRIALS.

ONE day whilst sitting alone, weighed down under great depression of spirits—clouds gathering on every hand, the past seeming gloomy, the future dark,—a dear friend called to see me. I opened my heart to her, and poured into her attentive ear my anticipated troubles. Amongst other things I remarked, "I wonder how it is that anticipated trials are so much harder to bear than real ones."

To which she replied, "It surely must be because in the one instance we have Jesus supporting and comforting us; in the other we are left to bear alone the burden we have unnecessarily made for ourselves."

I was very much struck with the remark. It fully accounts, methinks, for the great misery one feels whilst brooding over expected trials. How often one hears people remark, when a great trouble

really does come, "I never should have thought she would have borne it so well, when the prospect of it seemed almost to crush her!" The promise is, "As thy day thy strength shall be;" not "as thy fears." When we rise in the morning, we ask God for spiritual food for the day; and yet, perhaps, in some leisure moment, we carry ourselves forward in thought to days, and weeks, and months and even years, placing ourselves in circumstances where we may never be; raising difficulties which we may never have to encounter; weeping over losses and crosses which we may never experience; and yet we wonder that we receive no comfort, and are left alone to bear our imaginary burdens, forgetting that we have only gathered manna sufficient for the day.

And does not the very fact of our Saviour leaving us alone to bear our anticipated trials teach us that it is wrong to indulge them? for if, in our thoughts, our words, and our actions, we cannot feel that Jesus is with us, to help and countenance us, we may be sure there is something wrong about us. And that must indeed be wrong which not only brings with it unnecessary unhappiness and alarm, but which unnerves us for present duty. We want all our energies and all our strength for present trials; let us, therefore, strive to

"Live for to day;
To-morrow's light
To-morrow's cares will bring to sight,"

and we shall be sure to find "grace sufficient in every time of need."

A MODEL PRAYER-MEETING.

HAS any Christian now living ever seen a prayer-meeting at which all the members of the church, within whose bounds it was held, were present? I never have; and I never recollect to have read of but one such meeting—the prayer-meeting held in Jerusalem just before Pentecost, A.D. 33. Of that meeting it is recorded, "These *all* continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication; the number of the names together were about a hundred and twenty."

And this prayer-meeting appears the more remarkable, because,—

1. It was held at the warmest season of the year, near the end of June, a season at which the heat in Jerusalem is often very oppressive. In our large city churches, at the present day, it is a difficult matter

to get even a handful together, for a prayer-meeting, in very warm weather. Those who are regular in attendance at other seasons, find in the oppressive heat a satisfactory reason for absenting themselves.

2. It was held at the time of a grand festival, and when Jerusalem was full of strangers. "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the part of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians were there." I recollect, some time ago, when a large commercial convention was in session in the city of my residence, an active member of the church came to the pastor, and suggested that it would be well to suspend the prayer-meeting for that week, since the people would be so much taken up with the duties of hospitality, and so much interested in the discussions of the convention, that they would not feel like going to the prayer-meeting. I suppose he thought, "We do not often have a commercial convention, but we can have a prayer-meeting at any time."

3. All the female members of the church were there; and this notwithstanding the disadvantages alluded to, as to its being a festival time, when they probably had guests to entertain. How they all contrived to get to prayer-meeting at such a time, Luke does not tell us. He simply says, "*the women* and Mary the mother of Jesus" were there. At the present day there does not seem to be any insuperable difficulty in the way of the female members of our churches getting to a party, or a concert, or a popular lecture; but to get to a prayer-meeting, especially if they have not a pious father, or husband, or brother, or son to accompany them, or if they have friends or strangers staying with them, is one of the few things in which their "woman's wit" is altogether at fault.

I once heard an old pastor remark that he looked upon his weekly prayer-meeting as *the pulse* of his church—its beat, strong, full, and regular, indicating a healthy state of the body. Certain it is that there seems to be almost as intimate a relation between the prompt and full gathering of a church at the prayer-meeting and the outpourings of God's Spirit upon that church, as between the gathering of the cloud in the heavens and the descent of the summer's shower.

I have heard the question asked, why have we no Pentecostal revivals in our day? May not one principal reason be, we have no ante-Pentecostal prayer-meetings now-a-days?

HOME AFFECTION AND TRAINING.

PARENTS often err on the side of unwise fondness for their children, overlooking their infirmities of temper, and those bad habits which might be easily corrected in the germ ; but we are persuaded that a larger number err from a want of sympathy and equable affection. The utterance of harsh and fretful words, the absence of loving looks and gentle ways, often repel a wayward child, and grieve a dutiful one. There is a tender pathos in the following incident which will steal its way into every parent's heart :—

“A little girl, after witnessing the affection of a father towards his child, observed, ‘Oh, I wish my father would love me as N.’s father does her.’ And why did he not? She was a lovely girl, and might therefore easily win the affection of a person who did not stand thus related to her, and much more of her own father. But did not the father love her? He doubtless did; yet his manner towards her was not affectionate, but harsh and severe. Hence the inference of the child was natural; and in her artless simplicity, she gave expression to her feelings in the presence of a friend, who repeated it to the writer. How much is sometimes lost by a father in the government of a child (a mother is less liable to this fault), by the absence of that sweetness of manner which wins the affections. A stern, forbidding manner may excite fear, and overawe and subdue the child by the force of authority, but the kind of subjection produced by this treatment is far from being filial, and the effect upon the child's temper cannot be otherwise than injurious. ‘Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.’”

BE A MOTHER TO YOUR CHILDREN.

BE a mother to your children; be a companion for your boys and girls. The follies of the young are too often only the manifestation of the sins of the mother—sins of omission, of neglect of the child's thought, which, instead of being trained, as the gardener inclines the twig, is allowed to be blown about by every passing breeze. Fill your child's thoughts full; stuff them to repletion with the good, and there will be no room for the bad to get in. You know how to

satisfy the demands of his stomach, yet you do not attempt to cater for his nobler, mental, and moral nature. Be a companion for your children. Teach them that, if weaned from your breast, they are not put away from your heart; and from thence let them still draw their spirit, as they before found their life's blood. Be a mother! A mother! The fashionable woman whom we once met dancing wantonly at a city ball, when her only child lay at home sickening with scarlet fever, is not the type we urge you to copy. She was but an ostrich who leaves its young on the desert sands. No, be a true mother, instinct with all the holy attributes of maternity. There are many of you who can, like us, point to the mansions of the blest for the type of a mother not dead, for she yet lives in our hearts, stirring us up, with a sweet, soft voice, yet ringing louder than clarion-blasts through our inmost souls, to duty.

Ah! if you will but accept the noble office you are called upon to perform, if you will but *occupy* the heart of your husband, if you will but fold your children into your own self, know their inmost thoughts, be their confidant, their life-spring, their guide, "truant husbands," as they are called—sons designated as "only a little wild"—will be rare. To these pure joys, does the true woman say dress and fashion are preferable?

Like all good actions, these will rebound with blessings. In the exercise of these duties, in the cultivation of home joys and affections, the exposures and consequent diseases will not be met with. Life will not be a state of constant invalidism. Will you think of these things?

❧ **W**HATEVER you think proper to grant a child, let it be granted at the first word, without the entreaty or prayer; and, above all, without making any conditions. Grant with pleasure, refuse with reluctance, but let your refusal be irrevocable; let not opportunity shake your resolution; let the participle "no," when once pronounced, be a wall of brass, which a child, after he has tried his strength against it half-a-dozen times, shall never more endeavour to shake.—*British Workmen.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE GREAT DELIVERANCE.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 3RD, 1861,
BY THE HON. AND REV. B. W. NOEL, M.A.
AT JOHN STREET CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW.

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."—
MATT. XXIV. 46.

WE may learn from these words of our Saviour, if we are disciples of Jesus Christ, from what we have been rescued. The persons who will go away into everlasting punishment are what we once were. They are those who do not love the disciples of Christ—who therefore do not love God, but are disbelievers. This is therefore the doom of unbelievers, such as we were once. We may therefore look upon this scene as one which shall happen with regard to ourselves when the time of the judgment shall come. Unbelievers will go away into everlasting punishment.

Let us contemplate what we have been saved from. We have been rescued, in the first place, from the curse of Almighty God. The punishment spoken of here is described by Jesus in the forty-first verse—"Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire." Unbelievers may care very little for the grace of God now, because they do not believe this, or if they do believe it, they have a number of mercies from God which divert their thoughts and give them present happiness; and because they hope, somehow or other, to escape at last. But when the hour comes in which the sentence will not only be pronounced but inflicted, it is impossible to imagine with what extreme horror every such an one will reflect. "I am accursed—God has cursed me—he has doomed me to misery—his eye is upon me, his hand is over me—where can I flee? how can I hide? is it possible to resist him? how can I bear this intolerable curse, this almighty, omnipresent, immovable, everlasting curse—how can I bear it? You may feebly imagine with what utter despair a person then will reflect that he is accursed. From that, through infinite mercy, you and I who believe in Jesus have been saved. Our Lord has taught us that the sufferings of that state must be great from the associates with whom every unbeliever will then be linked for ever. He will at the last day assign to unbelievers their doom—"Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." All that disbelieve in Jesus will then be shut up in that lake of fire in which the devil and his angels are plunged. They must therefore be the companions of these malignant spirits. Now, only reflect what the devil is revealed in Scripture to be. Remember with what remorseless cruelty he saw the goodness and the happiness of Adam and Eve, only to determine their destruction. And when he saw Abel loving and serving God, he could not rest till he filled his brother's heart with such malice that he murdered

Mother's Magazine, May, 1861.

him. And now, from that day to this, he has been seeking a horrible satisfaction, such as a devil might enjoy, in making men and women wretched and miserable, as much as he can. Look at the pictures of the demoniacs, over whom, in the days of his earthly sojourn, Christ was allowed to prevail. You may there see what the devil was. Recollect how, when he saw a young man of great promise who seemed to believe in Jesus and to love him and to be a benefactor to mankind, he never rested till by his devilish suggestions he led him to be a traitor, a hypocrite, a malignant adversary of his Master, and then, so filled his soul with tumultuous agony that he could not rest till he committed self-murder. Think that the death of Jesus amid the imprecations and the hatred of our race was the work of the devil, and then add to this the thought that six thousand years of misery have only hardened him into more resolute enmity to God, and fired him with insensate rage, and then imagine what it is to have him for a companion—to be under him—for those who choose to be his slaves here, will find that they are his slaves for ever. Thank God we are saved from that companionship.

But there are other companions there. The Word of God describes them to us repeatedly as the weeds and fruitless trees; they burn together like the chaff. As those who sin against God will be cast into the same furnace of fire—as they are all doomed to the same lake of fire—therefore they must be together. Jesus will say to all unbelievers "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire." Only let your imagination rest for a little while on the company that will be gathered there—thieves and liars, and murderers, and seducers, and idolaters, and drunkards—fiendish drunkards who made their homes on earth, earthly hells—wife beaters and wife murderers will all be there; and there will be the ferocious slave takers, and slave drivers, and slave holders, who have made their money by tormenting men with the lash, and starving them as well as driving them. There will be the inquisitors who gloated over the torments of the Christians. There will be the sensual with all their filth, and the angry with all their fury, and the malignant with all their hatred. There will be altogether atheistic blasphemers and scoffers at all goodness—heartless creatures who never could feel for any but themselves, and whose selfishness will then become perfect. That is what the society of the damned will be, and into that society every man who disbelieves in Jesus will be plunged. Thanks be to God we are saved from that. Do you suppose that men and women could live in that society long without employment, and without any hope, without becoming like it themselves? Imagine what a man would be who was shut up with a hundred of the worst of our race—the coarse, the brutal, the licentious, the lewd, the hypocritical, the heartless, the selfish—for fifty years. Would any of us be able to resist the dreadful tendency to become like our society? What will it be then to be shut up among such beings, age after age? Who will be able to avoid growing into the hideous likeness, even if he were not perfect in depravity when he entered that state? There is every reason to fear that when an unconverted man dies, and all the checks upon sin are withdrawn, together with hope and mercy, he will become utterly depraved at once. But suppose it were not so—what a misery it would be if any virtues were left! And what would become of any man here, shut up with such beings, and he becoming like them—his own soul filled with tumultuous and raging passions, making his heart a hell within a hell? We were all on our way to it, and if it will not be our actual doom before long, we owe it to nothing but the sovereign mercy of God who has been pleased to save us. Let us adore him with thankful hearts.

If we ask what is the home and dwelling place of those I have been describing, Jesus has told us that it will be in fire, and that, whatever it expresses, must mean great pain. He has told us that all the wicked—all that offend against God—who live

in unpardoned sins, shall be cast by him into a furnace of fire—by him, the loving patient, gentle, forgiving Jesus. It must be a woeful, an awful place! Whatever it is to be cast into a furnace of fire—to have nothing but a prison house of fire—it will be a dreadful thing to pass those gates, an awful thing to see those fiery vaults, so solid that no combination of the wretched prisoners will ever be able to burst them again to eternity. And that dreadful prison will only be made worse by some remembering that they had every luxury the heart could desire or the mind invent here. When they go from the midst of an earthly paradise into that dreadful prison, it will be a weary place for them—for every man that does not believe in Jesus. But from such a prison we who believe are saved. Let us bless God for it—let us thank him with most adoring gratitude that we are not about to be plunged into it ourselves.

What do you imagine will be the employments of that prison house? How can you employ yourself, do you think, when you are sick, weary, and weak? When your head is bursting with aching, can you employ yourselves except in thinking of your pain, and perhaps vainly trying to remove it? What will then these wretched men and women do? Jesus has told us something of it when he warns us not to live in any sin, because sin is fatal. He says at all costs we must get rid of sin. "If thy hand offend thee cut it off." If you are driven into sin by anything whatever—though dear to you as a right hand, cut it off, part with it, cast it away from you with disgust and decision. "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to be cast into hell fire." "Where their worms dieth not!" Worms will gorge themselves on our bodies and have their fill, but as soon as they have eaten off the flesh down to the bare skeletons they must die themselves; but those worms that will banquet on the souls of the lost will never die. "Their worm dieth not." Men have conjectured what the worm is. Is it conscience? Is it sin? What is it—the worm that never dies? We know many worms that will gnaw men's souls if they are lost. Do you suppose a man will be in hell and not be gnawed by recollections? What a dreadful recollection it will be to think how he has treated the goodness of God! "God gave me a Saviour, and I would not have him; God told me he would give me his Spirit, but I would not ask it. He gave me his Word, but I would not read it; he placed me among his servants, but I would not have their company—made me hear many sermons, but I shut my heart as well as my ears. God was ready to pardon me any day, but I would not be pardoned. He loaded me with mercies, but I hated him for them." What awful remorse will gnaw the soul of an unbeliever in hell! And that is not the only worm. A man will think how wicked he has been—how worthless he has been. He will think what a desperate fool the wisest man is—what a desperate fool *he* was for refusing such happiness for the sake of such worthless pleasure. That regret will gnaw a man's soul keenly. That is not all. A man must be haunted, if he ever reaches that fiery place, by the memory of what he has lost. Noblemen, rich English merchants, capitalists, members of Parliament, princes, kings, emperors—how they will be gnawed by the memory of what they have lost—what God gave them and they abused. How they will think of those pleasant things—all the delights of nature and art, all that taste and refinement could give—and how pleasant their homes were—and how all their lives were a succession of delights—but all lost because they would not have the Saviour. It will be a terrible recollection. Memory will gnaw the soul like a worm that never dies. Do you not think imagination will have a sharp sting at that time? How will a husband think of his wife in glory whom he spited because she loved the Saviour! Do you not think they will imagine what glorious scenes they have lost, and what bliss they might have had? We should have lost it too, but for God's sovereign grace. Oh! let us bless him with adoring gratitude that he has not sentenced us to be gnawed for ever with these worms. There is another worm that

will gnaw the condemned. The poet has put into the mouth of Satan these words when speaking of the eternity of the lost:—

“ All hope excluded thus,
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear;
Farewell remorse.”

That is a vain thought. There is no such thing. We have not lost all fear when we have lost all hope. Hell itself will show God's mercy because he does not inflict all he can, but the least that is required, and when a man is in hell he will say to himself, “Is there not something worse in the unseen depths of eternity which shall come upon me?—I am in the hands of the Almighty, and I hate and curse him.” There will be an insufferable dread that will thrust its sting into that man's heart in that day. Thank God we are saved from that, if we believe in Jesus.

If these are the employments of hell, what are its possessions? Here God blesses industry, effort, and social virtues, and men who exercise them, though they are his enemies—though they are atheists—prosper. It is God's moral government, and very wise and kind it is. He makes men moral and so he blesses morality, good temper, honesty, and obliging conduct, even in an atheist. But what will he give to these men if they are at last sentenced. There is one doom—Jesus has declared what he will say “Take the talent from him.” In that fiery prison a man will not have anything—not even a drop of water to alleviate his burning thirst. If a man will have the world now at all costs, even if he tramples conscience in the dirt, let him remember he will have nothing but the world—not one drop of water by and bye. Thank God we are saved from that destruction.

If we ask how will it all end?—then recollect the awful words of Jesus—“These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment.” What is to terminate it? How can that punishment end? Is not it a desperate hope to think it shall ever end? If the man who is in that suffering lives on growing worse and worse, what is to end his punishment? If mercy, and invitations, and kindness, and blessings without number do not turn men's hearts now, what is to turn them in hell? What would be required to terminate this punishment, is to learn to trust in Jesus and love God. What is to make a man trust Jesus and love God in hell? There is no offer of the Spirit in hell. A man cannot come to Christ now without the Spirit, and when the Spirit is withdrawn from him in hell, what will turn him? Will misery ever make a man love his torturer, or trust the avenging justice which sentences him? There is nothing to make men turn if they once get into hell. My hearer, you must escape hell, for you will never come out if you once get in. Take heed you do not get into those fiery vaults. Some have hoped that if they cannot repent and be ever blessed they may yet be annihilated. God can annihilate, but has God ever annihilated anything? Has God said one word to show that he means to annihilate the wicked, or any one of them? It is a desperate thing to take such an issue upon fancy. We must go upon what God has said. Some hope that death is annihilation. Death is not annihilation. What is the natural death that happens to a man now? There is no annihilation of the body. Not one atom less remains. The whole body remains and not one atom is lost. What becomes of the spirit? That is not annihilated by death, but at once enters upon a life of joy or sorrow. Therefore natural death is not annihilation—either of the body, which rises again, or of the soul that lives on. If, therefore, the doom that is coming is like natural death, to which it is compared, it is not annihilation but life—a horrible life. We read of the world being destroyed, but destruction is not annihilation. We read of the Israelites being destroyed by serpents, but that was just equivalent to death. Destruction is the desolation—the ruin—the wreck of everything that is made. If you dash a glass ornament to shivers it is

destroyed, but all the materials are left, and though we are threatened with the destruction of the soul, where is there anything that answers to annihilation? How can the immortal spirit be destroyed in any sense but to be made miserable? Annihilation does not take place on the earth. During all the six thousand years since Adam was created, there has not been one atom lost or annihilated that we know of, and what a desperate hope it is that a poor sinner when he is placed under the wrath of God will be annihilated. But if he is not annihilated—if his growing sin deserves growing punishment, what did the Lord mean by saying he will be destroyed? What did Paul mean by saying that when the Lord Jesus comes again those that know not God and obey not his gospel will be punished with everlasting destruction? To be destroyed is certainly to lose all that constitutes dignity, strength, happiness, hope; to be destroyed is to be like a serpent, crushed under a rock; it is to have no hope ever again—to live on without the least prospect of regaining it. That is to be destroyed. Jesus has told us here that the punishment is everlasting, and he has employed that word to express it which is used to express the eternity of God—his own eternity—and the eternity of the happiness of the just. It is the strongest word that could be used; and the inspired word says that the smoke of their torment shall rise up for ages of ages. It is a miserable hope for a man that he may possibly go to sleep or be annihilated. There is nothing that intimates it; but Jesus has said this—and oh that it might warn every one in this chapel—Jesus has said of those that disbelieve in him, likening himself to a great corner stone, “He that shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder.” It will absolutely crush him. Every man that dies without faith in Jesus will be absolutely crushed by him. I remember reading of one of the Moguls who invented this punishment for criminals:—He had two rocks prepared with the upper and under surface of each exactly corresponding—the under rock horizontal and with its upper surface perfectly smooth, and the upper rock also horizontal and having its lower surface perfectly smooth. The upper rock was then raised over the other by a great apparatus, the criminal was fastened on the lower, and the apparatus was set in motion, causing the upper rock gently and softly to descend upon him till it rested its weight upon the wretched man. When the rock was removed the body of the criminal was found to be flattened just like the skin of a lion or tiger—shapeless, and completely flattened like parchment, and nothing to recall the resemblance of a man in the least. Now that is just what Jesus means when he says that on whomsoever that stone shall fall it will crush him—grind him to powder. Let any man in his senses reflect what this means. It must mean that the punishment of an unbeliever is as irresistible as that falling rock—as intolerable as that falling rock—as irremediable as that falling rock; and that a man who shall come under the just vengeance of God, pronounced by Jesus, will have a ruin which is irresistible, intolerable, and irremediable. Oh let us bless God that we are saved from it. We have all been exposed to it. There is not one of us that was not on our road to it and just about to suffer it. And if we have been saved, how have we been saved? Entirely, from first to last, by God Almighty. He gave us Jesus. He has furnished us with his book. He has given us his Spirit to make us believe the record, when many disbelieve it. He has first changed our hearts, and pardoned us, and fitted us for heaven; and when we escape that awful doom—as we have escaped it if we are in Christ—we shall have to give all the praise to him. Let us therefore begin to praise him now.

And now let us look shortly to the opposite picture—not what we have escaped from, but what through mercy we shall have to enjoy. It will be as glorious as the doom was awful, from which divine grace has saved us. Jesus has declared that the unbelievers shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. Now, who are

the righteous? If you look at the context, you will see they are those who loved Christians and were told that they therefore loved the Lord of Christians, and that because they loved him they were believers in him. Our Saviour therefore meant believers, and he might well express it so, because he who believes in Jesus is at once set free from guilt and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus himself is imputed to him, as unto and upon all them that believe. Faith is accounted to them for righteousness, and faith communicates real righteousness. All that believe in Jesus are sanctified by that faith. If a man be in Christ he is a new creature, and as soon as he is in Christ, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, he is said to be renewed in righteousness and true holiness. So every believer is accounted righteous, and Jesus spake of his own immediate followers when he said the righteous should go into life eternal.

I must now merely notice the heads of this life. It is composed of various elements, all of them filling our souls with delight. The first is to live in the presence of God. You may see some of the peculiarities of this eternal life in that precious promise of our Lord—"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Here the Lord Jesus says we shall be in his Father's house—in our Father's house. We shall be with God. Now, I believe that that alone expresses a happiness that no thought can reach. Paul tells us that when that time comes, God will be all in all. And if we reflect upon it we shall see what a perfect happiness man will have when he can understand God's character, contemplate his works, and be prepared to appreciate his glory. In the Psalm we have read to-day you have seen how a man may delight in him on earth. What then will be our delight when we contemplate him as beloved children, and love him because he first loved us! But Jesus says we shall be with him then. "In my Father's house are many mansions—I go to prepare a place for you," that "where I am there ye may be also." Now let our grateful hearts reflect upon what the blessed Saviour has done for us. He has died for us; he has risen for us to the right hand of God; he has pleaded our cause with God and has prevailed; he has secured our justification and pardon; he has obtained for us the gift of the Holy Spirit; he has watched over us as our shepherd; he has heard the prayers we have uttered in his name, and he has set before us a perfect pattern. All the sufferings he endured for us, he endured out of a love without knowledge. When we reach heaven it will be all his gift. We shall see the effect of his suffering and kindness, and why we ought to love him as he loved us. Even now, if a person has right faith, he rejoices with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. What shall it be then when we see him face to face, and see the heaven which we owe to his friendship? Think also of the adorable excellency which we shall understand then, when we see him who is the image of the invisible God. Jesus has also told us that we shall have God-like companions—for when he said to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you," and "I will come again and receive you unto myself," that must refer to all his disciples. He will receive each one; and if we go to be with Jesus, we go to be with one another. Imagine what a noble society is gathering there, year after year, and day after day. Imagine all that you have seen here below that was noble, excellent, gentle and loving, and like Jesus—all that on earth seemed most attractive and lovely; the society there will be like that. Everyone will be like Jesus, body and soul—everyone bright and beautiful in form, God-like, with a perfect heart, and a perfect intellect—with everything that can win the heart and keep the heart—what a blessed society to live in and move amongst for ever! And that which will render us capable of enduring it, will be, that we shall be ourselves among them—their peers—just like them. You and I will be like Jesus that day, as certainly as he is true and just. And what will it be there to appreciate such excellency? Perfection is in itself to share the happiness of God. What is the happiness of God? Why, to contemplate his own perfections, manifested in his own works, and all the happiness that those perfections create in others. We shall have all that happiness ourselves. We shall have the same moral character—contemplate the same glorious perfections in the same glorious works. We shall share in the happiness that God sheds like a flood over his own universe, and how delighted shall we be in the contemplation! If we are like Jesus we shall appreciate his character. You always find that persons here, have the greatest pleasure in the society of those whose virtues resemble their own. If a man is wise, he delights in the conversation of the wise. If a man is holy and good, he loves the conversation of the holy and just, and good. When therefore we are like Jesus, we shall delight in him, and in those noble creatures that are around him, and whom he has redeemed from sin and sorrow. Then too, no doubt, we shall have employments that are worthy the place and the society to which we are called. First, I must say a word as to the place. Jesus has told us it will be in our Father's

house above. That house does not change. There God is; there the saints are; there Christ Jesus is now. It is but a fancy that heaven is a condition and not a place. A condition it undoubtedly is, but it is a place too. Jesus in his glorified form is there, and there we shall be when we are raised from the dead. Consequently it must be a place, and it is said to be our Father's house to which Jesus ascended when he rose from the dead. Into that world where Jesus now is we shall be admitted. Its glory is somewhat described in the last two chapters of the Revelation—most figuratively no doubt, but still described. The foundations are very precious stones—the walls are jasper—the buildings are gold. The light thereof is God himself, and it needs no light of the sun or of the moon, for there is God himself and there is his glorious throne—the throne of God and the Lamb. God placed his servant Adam in a garden full of delights, and we are going to a paradise of delights. Jesus said to the dying thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" and Paul was caught up in the third heavens. You have often gazed with admiration on the transcendent beauty of many scenes in this world, which yet has drunk the blood of Jesus, and of which God has said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Yet it is lovely beyond expression. But the paradise of God is more beautiful by far than anything we can see here. There are scenes on earth which bring tears of admiration into our eyes, and of which Robert Hall said that an angel on his mission of mercy would forget his business in the admiration with which he looked at them. But what will it be in the world where sin never shall exist and which has never undergone the curse? Well may we say with Heber—

"Oh great and good beyond compare,
If these thy minor works are fair;
If thus thy glories gild the span
Of ruined earth and fallen man,
How glorious must the mansions be
Where thy redeemed dwell with thee?"

I doubt not that will be so. Foolish, then, beyond expression, are those who to get these earthly treasures, and comforts, and luxuries, throw away such a celestial home as that we are going to.

And if you ask what are the possessions or the pursuits of Christ's servants there, God does not speak in hyperbole and exaggeration, and he says "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son." God the Almighty loves him as a child, and do you think he will not give him all things that his nature can possess? He will inherit all things. There is a glorious inheritance prepared for every one of you who trust in Jesus. And for the employments of that world will it not be enough to contemplate God—to learn more and more of God throughout eternity—to learn more and more of Jesus our Saviour, as age after age we witness all the wisdom, holiness, goodness, that was manifest in his redeemed work, and see what blessings he has created by those holy loving sufferings that he endured? Will it not be enough to converse with the wisest of beings—with all those innumerable beings, each having his separate store of knowledge? Will it not be enough to study the works of God and serve him day and night, and go, as angels do now, on messages of love and kindness, perhaps to this world? Will it not be enough to share with the joy of Jesus when Jesus says "Enter into my joy?" And will it not be enough to reign with Christ—made masters of the "many things" when the "few things" here on earth are resigned? Such possessions are ready for all those who have the happiness to trust in Jesus.

And if you ask the duration of this blessed employment and of that happy company, Jesus has said, "They shall go into life eternal." Eternal life! What is to end it? God will never destroy our happiness while we love and serve him, and what is to hinder our loving and serving him? You may say that Adam and Eve once loved and served him perfectly, but lost paradise. So they did, but there was a tempter that crept into paradise and with devilish subtlety deceived them. But there is no tempter in heaven. Satan and his angels are shut in the lake of fire, and every other tempter too. Yet, you may say, the angels lost it. They were holy, loving and good, and in the image of God, for God created them. Yet they lost it. Self tempted them and why should not we fall in the same manner? There would be no impossibility in that—nothing to hinder our doing as the fallen angels did, if we were left to ourselves; but God makes it impossible. God is our loving Father, and his love, which has saved us from the brink of hell, will never cast us out of heaven. The merit of Jesus has won for us *eternal life*. God delights in giving it in honour of his Son, and the promise of God renders that perfectly sure which on other grounds might be only probable. Again and again did the blessed Saviour reveal eternal life as the reward of his servants. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." "This is the Father's will, that he that seeth the Son and believeth in him may have everlasting life." "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me shall not perish but have eternal life." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them." Jesus went through the world telling his servants everywhere they should have eternal life, and he has not forgotten it. And so, we may say, with adoring love to God. There is the promise—he has promised to us eternal life. We know in whom we believe. We can trust his promise. Ages will never break it. Eternity will never break it. This is the promise, even eternal life. He has promised it to faith; we have faith and therefore we have the promise, and we shall have eternal life.

Now brethren let us bless this Saviour. Let us never be weary of praising and blessing Jesus who has bought us with his blood. Let us rejoice in his name with something of the joy we shall have through eternity. Let us remember that the Lord Jesus has given us all, and if many of his disciples have rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory in the midst of persecution, I ask you why we should not begin this life in heaven now? It has often been said that glory is grace completed, and grace glory begun, and so it is. If you think over all these promised elements of our future and eternal happiness, you will see why we should have them all in their beginning now. Therefore let us begin to prepare ourselves for the bliss above by the bliss we taste below—loving our Saviour—loving and serving our God—rejoicing in his name—seeking our ultimate perfection—getting on towards eternal life—growing in holiness every day. Let us watch for it and strive to prepare ourselves for it, for he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as his master is pure, abstaining from all that is wicked, and trying to be manifestly here as we are in reality, the sons and the daughters of the Most High.

But while thus I speak to those who belong to this happy company, and who are saved from hell and are heirs of heaven, with hardly less gladness of heart do I turn to you who have no part in it whatever, but have before you an intolerably awful doom. Because if you are disbelieving and unhappy—if your future is dark and your soul disconsolate—if you are pressed down with a sense of sorrow and sin, then that very sorrow and sin may bring you speedily—instantly—to share in our joy. Remember dear unconverted friends, troubled in mind now and thinking you shall lose that heaven and sink into that hell—remember what your circumstances really are. Jesus has died for your sins—is not that enough? Jesus has given his life a ransom for all. That includes you, and therefore his life was given as a ransom for you. 'Twas the price he paid to set you free from all this tremendous ruin. Jesus has died—has lived—has gone up to heaven—that he might plead your cause. Then will not you trust him? If you will accept Jesus this moment as your friend and Saviour, he will accept you this moment as his disciple, for he has said so. He has bid you come to him instantly for salvation, and assured you that you shall find that salvation, for you can have no rest to a burdened soul without salvation. He will not cast you out, but is ready to welcome you this very hour as he has welcomed us who believe. Do your own sins prevail and prevent? He has promised you the aid of his Spirit if you will but ask him. If you ask for the Spirit to bring you to trust in Jesus you shall have it, and that Saviour who is thus ready to welcome you will become instantly your shepherd—will give you power as well as pardon—will help you to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil—will make you a new creature—will carry you through all sorts of difficulties and temptations even to the end, and make you secure through his love, the moment you trust in him. Oh! why should not you trust in him? Why do you not? Why is there one man or woman here that does not trust in Christ for salvation? Was there ever such a wondrous blessing attached to such a simple condition? Trust in the Saviour and you are saved. Trust in the Deliverer and you are blessed to all eternity. Is he not worthy of your trust—ought you not to trust in him—is he not a perfect Saviour—what else have we to make us happy or safe but this very trust? And you are asked to trust him. Do you ask what should you trust? Why, trust in his righteousness as to that which merits heaven for you—trust in his mediation as to that which will secure what he has promised. Trust in him to intercede before God. Trust in his power to save you; in his love to save you. Trust in God that he will fulfil the testimony he has given of his Son. Trust in all the promises. Only trust in Jesus and you will be saved and become a new man, with new aims, new pleasures, new tastes, and a new world. Trust in Jesus as the most rational and the most powerful thing in the world. Trust in Jesus—you dear troubled brethren, who are unhappy, and think you shall sink into hell. Trust in Jesus this very hour—this very moment. Do not let the sun go down before you trust in Jesus, and then you are saved from that dreadful hell, and your tongues will be loosed to save others, and you will go forth as benefactors to your fellow creatures, to lead the perishing into that same happiness in which you so much rejoice yourselves.

Sketches and Essays.

THE LAW OF THY MOTHER.

A MOTHER's influence is great, as a mother's love is strong. Every mother, therefore, should endeavour to use her influence wisely, and for her child's eternal good. A very great responsibility rests upon godly mothers, which they should realize, and, realizing, should act under a sense of it. The mother's life should be the child's lesson; and the mother's communications should be the child's law. The authority of the mother is essentially the authority of love; and the teachings of the mother should be the teachings of love. With these thoughts in the mind, we want to enforce the inspired admonition to the young, "Forsake not the law of thy mother." (Prov. i. 8.)

The object to be regarded. A godly mother's law. Oh, what a privilege to have a godly mother! One who knows the value of the soul, the person of the Saviour, the way of salvation, and the power of religion in her own heart! Such a mother will teach her child to value what is really important and spiritual; to secure an interest in the spiritual and eternal; to avoid the sinful and dangerous; to do the necessary and the moral; to enjoy the lawful and the profitable; to prepare for the future and eternal; in a word, she will enforce on her child the advice of the Saviour, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." The salvation of the soul will be the nearest her heart. The early and entire consecration of her child to God will be the object at which she aims. For this she will teach, and pray, and act. Nor will less than this ever satisfy her maternal mind. Every child should carefully attend to a mother's teaching, treasure up a mother's lessons, bear in mind the object of a mother's prayers, and endeavour to carry out a mother's wishes. Notice, then,

The Temptation to be Resisted. When young people leave home, and enter into a house of business, or some family, to learn a trade or a profession, they find themselves surrounded by new circum-

The Mother's Magazine, June. 1861.

stances, fall in with new companions, and are often plied with new temptations. Away from home, from under a mother's eye, out of the reach of the sound of a mother's voice, they are apt to forget the law of their mother. They once thought that they never should, never could; but they do. Not only so; they are tempted to forsake a mother's law, and adopt a new and untried rule of life, perhaps the very opposite to that which their mother gave them. Then they begin to pursue a different course, and a downward course too. This is smooth and easy at first. The flesh is pleased, youthful lusts are gratified, bad habits are contracted, the seeds of repentance are sown, and death, eternal death, is sought in the error of their ways. O how many young men, how many young women, have been ruined, by forsaking the law of their mother! Hence,

The Admonition, "Forsake not the law of thy mother." Think of a mother's love, so strong, so tender, and so constant. Think of a mother's wisdom, implanted in her heart by your mother's God. Think of a mother's concern for her child; how deep, how lively, how uninterrupted. A child may forget its mother; but the mother will not forget her child. The child's interest in its mother may die out; but the mother's interest in her child never will. A mother's love is an undying love. A mother's wisdom is quick and inventive. A mother's concern for her offspring is as lasting as her life. Think of meeting your mother before God in judgment! Then her lessons will all be revived in your memory; then her prayers and tears will come up before you anew. Then she will rejoice in your salvation, or acquiesce in the sentence of the just Judge, when he bids you depart from him into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Yes, your mother will acquiesce in what is just, even in the eternal condemnation of a child, as a hardened, persevering rebel against God! Oh, how awful the thought—a mother obliged to agree to the banishment of her child from God and glory, or be unholy and unjust! Think of having the image of your mother, a sainted mother, a glorified mother, stamped upon your imagination for ever in hell. Again to hear that tender, touching voice, warning, entreating, and beseeching you to flee to Jesus. To have the law of thy mother, and the efforts of thy mother to save thee, ever before thee, when all hope is gone, and every way of escape is barred and barred for ever. Think of how you may add to her joy, by deciding for God; or increase her sorrow,

by going on still in your trespass. Young man, young woman, by all the tenderness of a mother's love, by the intense concern of a mother's heart, if you would not shorten the days of her life, or embitter her dying hours, I beseech you, "forsake not the law of thy mother!" By the dread thought of meeting thy mother as a witness against thee at the judgment-seat of Christ, and hearing her testify her approval of the sentence of condemnation, pronounced on you by the Saviour you have insulted and rejected, I beseech you, "forsake not the law of thy mother!" By the horrid thought of being haunted by the remembrance of your mother's form, tormented by the remembrance of your mother's prayers, and pierced through and through with the recollection of your mother's tears in hell for ever, I beseech you, "forsake not the law of thy mother." As you may greatly add to your mother's joys, or increase your mother's sorrows, by all the love of a child, by the duty of a child, I pray you, "forsake not the law of thy mother."

Few realize the value of a mother as they should, while they have one, especially a godly mother. But when death has done its work, when the soul has departed, to look at a mother's corpse, to follow the coffin that contains a mother's remains, or to stand by a mother's grave, will awaken strange thoughts, new feelings, and, perhaps, bitter regrets. While you have a mother, love her, obey her, and make her heart glad. Many forget and forsake the law of their mother when away from her. This is unwise, it is unkind, it is ungrateful. A mother's advice is disinterested; it is only for her child's good; it is the offspring of the deepest love, and often the result of the most earnest, fervent prayers. But, fascinated by new companions, deceived by an evil unbelieving heart, allured by a false and vain world, and ensnared by a cruel and crafty devil, too many of our young people forsake the law of their mother. Many will wish, but wish in vain, that they never had such a mother. It will increase their condemnation; it will add to their torments, and will give intensity to the bitter pangs generated by black despair. The thoughts of what a mother was, what a mother did, and how a mother tried to prevent the ruin of her child, will make hell ten times hotter than it would otherwise be to many a child of godly parents. But, on the other hand, many will bless God for ever, for a mother's love, a mother's example, and a mother's law. That love won the heart for Jesus; that example was a constant lesson of

warning, reproof, and instruction ; and that law constrained the soul to bow to the sceptre of Jesus, and trust alone in his blessed name. Young friends, endeavour to realize the value of a godly mother while you have one ; never, never, let any one, or any thing, tempt you to forsake her law, lest in hell you should bitterly and eternally regret it ; but let a mother's love, a mother's example, and a mother's law, lead you at once to Jesus, that so you may meet your mother with joy at last, and dwell with her in heaven for ever !

THE FAITHFUL WIFE.

It was a dark, dull morning ; a leaden-coloured sky above, and the bare ground beneath, was just an English picture of the last days of winter, or what are called the first days of spring. Still, the bare branches of the trees and the greenness of the fields were pleasant to look at. Almost everything is pleasant in the country ; there are, however, exceptions, and one of these exceptions is certainly a brick-field. The damp soil, full of puddles ; the long straight lines of wet bricks ; the low, stifling kiln, are ugly and monotonous objects ; and the freshest air from the sweetest meadow of cowslips and buttercups would be polluted by the nauseous smells of a brick-field.

In the one we are describing a number of men were at work. A rough set they were, as those generally are who labour at this calling. They were following their various occupations in different parts of the field. Amongst them were the moulder and the awe-bearer. The business of the moulder is, of course, to mould the clay into bricks ; the business of the awe-bearer is to take the wet bricks thus moulded and pile them up to dry. But what a difference there was between one of the awe-bearers and the rest of the labourers ! She was a neat, clean, respectable young woman. What could bring her to such a place, or to do such work, fit only for the roughest of men ? Perhaps the knowledge of *what motives* brought her called forth the respect of her rude fellow-labourers ; for that motive was, love to her husband, and a desire to save him from the consequences of his sin. Her husband was out "on the drink," as it is called ; and Mary, knowing that either the other men would be hindered from performing their work through his absence, or else that he would be

dismissed and another engaged to do it, had on this day filled his place. This she was in the habit of doing, day after day, whenever her husband was disinclined to do his own work, or disabled from doing it.

Mary loved her husband. She might, she did, day after day, in the manner we have described, fill his place in the brick-field, but she could not save him from the miserable and degrading effects of his sin. Often she sat alone, and thought, and grieved, and wept over his sin, yet she did not know what means to adopt to win him from it. "If he would only sign the pledge, and become a teetotaler, perhaps that might cure him!" So thought Mary; but how was this to be effected? By the best of human teachers—her own example. She would sign the pledge, she thought, herself; and perhaps in time, with patience, he might be induced to do the same.

She did so. Years went by, and Mary's husband still continued a drunkard. But did she, on this account, relax her efforts, give up her self-denial, or her earnest endeavours to win him back to soberness? No; one, two, three, four, five, six years she kept the pledge. It is far easier to begin to do right than to continue steadfast in doing it.

At length the wish of Mary's heart was granted; her husband signed the pledge. She had always been affectionate and assiduous in her care for his wants, but now she redoubled those cares. She carried him nice dinners to the brick-field; and by her attention, in various ways, to his comfort, tried to encourage him in doing right.

Unhappily, however, Mary's husband worked for a publican, who expected the men employed by him to spend six shillings during the week in drink, to be paid out of their wages on Saturday night; and this master was so dissatisfied to find that Mary's husband had left off this habit, that the poor man was induced to begin again, having kept the pledge scarcely so many *weeks* as Mary had *years* for his sake.

The miseries of home commenced again; poverty and sorrow defied all Mary's efforts to keep them from the door. But her husband had found a sober life to be the happier one; and so, at her persuasion, he left his master, and fortunately succeeded in getting work elsewhere. And now the happiness of Mary's life began; her husband and she worked and rejoiced together; every year added to their possessions. Their home, even in those sad days when Mary worked as a bricklayer's labourer, was always neat and clean; now

it was the picture of comfort; they had food, clothing, a supply for all their wants, and many friends; and they were happy in their love for one another.

Money accumulated as time went by; what should they do with it? The prudent and industrious Mary thought of a little shop. A shop they took. Her plain, honest, and upright dealings brought many customers, and business prospered. Her early sorrows had taught her sympathy for others; she was always ready to relieve the suffering, and she tried with her whole heart to recommend to others that sobriety which, in her husband, had been such a blessing to her. So Mary lived, beloved by many, respected by all, and passing her happy days in the enjoyment of the fruit of her good conduct in youth.

"How thy garments are warm when he quieteth the earth by the south wind." The change from the days of adversity to the days of prosperity are as when, after a long, cold spring, with nipping east winds and biting blasts, the genial air blows softly from the south, and all the flowers and blossoms of the season begin to expand with the promise of summer. But to long-continued adversity the spirit becomes in some degree inured, and the suffering is not perhaps so great as when the sunshine, so long waited for, suddenly disappears, and it is winter again. Mary had enjoyed her years of prosperity, but they were suddenly overclouded. She was struck with a deadly and incurable disease. It is a dreadful thing to have no hope of better days; Mary had none. She had done her duty in this world; the sense of duty and her warm affections had carried her through all her trials, and she had had her reward. But she must leave this world; increasing sorrow, pain, and suffering must be her lot till that time should come. She had not thought of another world. "What shall I do?" she said to herself; "I have not one action that I can carry to the throne of God, and say, 'Almighty God, I have done that good action; reward me for it.'" Praiseworthy as her life had been before man, she now felt for the first time she was a sinner before God.

But the voice of comfort came. The missionary read by her bedside the promises of the gospel. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as wool." "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." He reminded her of the leper, the centurion's servant, and Peter's wife's mother. "These persons,"

he told her, "did not present their own good works to merit the favour of the Redeemer; all they presented was their afflictions." In like manner, let her present the afflictions of her soul to Christ. "Ah, Mr —," she exclaimed, "I know nothing at all about it; I must confess I do not."

It pleased God to teach her. As the days and the weeks went by, and she heard from the missionary, time after time, the precepts and promises of the gospel, light came into her soul. She heard and believed. About this time the missionary, being absent for a few weeks, and remembering Mary in her sufferings, wrote to her, and advised her to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John. On his return home, when, in his usual round of visits, he entered her room, she put out her hand to him and said, "God bless you! I've read that beautiful chapter in St. John; I've read it over and over again. O those beautiful words, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you!' And He has comforted me. I believe that, if I were to die this night, Christ would receive me into one of those mansions. Ain't it beautiful! I never read anything like it. It makes me long to die to be there." The missionary said to her, "You have more to endure before that time comes." She calmly replied, "Perhaps so; but I don't see how I can; for no one knows what I endure but God and myself. But it don't matter; if I'm only ready, my Saviour will receive me." "Do you think," said the missionary, "that the Saviour will receive you because you have done something for Him?" She turned her eyes intently upon him, saying, "No; it is Christ who has done something for me."

From this time forth she seemed to be trying to acquaint herself with death; and so entirely did she lose all fear of it, that the missionary doubted whether she wished to die to be delivered from her sorrows and sufferings here. "No," she said, in answer to his questions, "I wish to die to be with Jesus. When I am in my grave," she continued, "sing beside it the hymn I love so much, 'Heaven is my home,' and tell those whom I leave behind the comfort I felt in those beautiful words, 'I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.'"

When her husband sat by her at the last, she tried to say to him all that her affection dictated; then folding her hands, she softly said, "I am happy, I am happy;" and so she died.

THE LOVED AND LOST.

TIME hath no power to bear away
 Thine image from my heart :
 No scenes that mark life's onward way
 Can bid it hence depart.
 Yet while our souls with anguish riven,
 Mourn loved and lost for thee,
 We raise our tearful eyes to heaven,
 And joy that thou art free.

We miss thee from the band so dear,
 That gathers round our hearth ;
 We listen still thy voice to hear
 Amid our household mirth.
 We gaze upon thy vacant chair,
 Thy form we seem to see ;
 We start to find thou art not there,
 Yet joy that thou art free.

A thousand old familiar things
 Within our childhood's home,
 Speak of the cherished absent one
 Who never more shall come.
 They wake with mingled bliss
 Fond memories of thee ;
 But would we call thee back again?
 We joy that thou art free.

Amid earth's conflicts, woe and care,
 When our dark path appears,
 'Tis sweet to know thou canst not share
 Our anguish and our tears ;
 That on thy head no more shall fall
 The storms we may not flee :
 Yes, safely sheltered from them all,
 We joy that thou art free.

For thou hast gained a brighter land,
 And death's cold stream is past ;
 Thine are the joys at God's right hand
 That shall for *ever* last.
 A crown is on thy angel brow,
 Thine eye the King doth see ;
 Thy home is with the seraphs now,
 We joy that thou art free.

Anon.

WOMAN'S WORK IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

WHEN once the heart of a woman has been won to the love of Christ, it is her happiness, her delight, to be employed in works of mercy. The truth of this is attested by the large number of voluntary workers among us; not only would that number be immensely increased, but their work would be rendered more useful and stable, if it were conducted on a fixed plan.

In desiring an organization for women's work in the Church, we deprecate all orders, vows, and institutions; any interference, in short, whatever with the conventional usages of society, so far as those usages are in accordance with the spirit and precepts of Christianity. We especially deprecate all interference, whatever, with the question of marriage. Let a woman's devoting herself to the service of the Church be no more a hindrance to her marriage, should she wish to marry, than it is to a man to take orders. Free labour for Christ, in a free home, is what we claim for women. One argument used in favour of institutions is, that many unmarried women have no home. To this we answer, there are very few women who have no social or family ties, and it is in the cultivation of such that a woman's ministering work begins. If she is not a wife or a mother, she is probably a daughter, a sister, or a kinswoman. Of those who are left entirely alone in the world, when such cases occur, let two or three live together, if they are so minded. An institution is not a family, nor anything at all like it. Another objection to institutions is, that women should work as helpers to man, not wholly apart from him, and, still less, under the sole direction of a clergyman. Had these institutions taken root in our country, it would be well to follow the rule of doing our own work, and leaving others to do theirs in their own manner; but they have not, and therefore the matter may be considered as an open and debateable question. But if we deprecate the idea, that, to serve the Church of Christ, women must necessarily be single, we are equally opposed to the opinion that they must necessarily be married. We are told that, in the early Church, widows who had been mothers were preferred for the office of deaconesses, in order that "having had a training in all human affections, they might know how to aid others, both by sympathy and counsel." But the sympathy, the tenderness, the feelings of a mother, are indigenous in the heart of a woman; they are implanted there by God Himself. They are in no need of cultivation; they grow wild, like the prim-

roses in the woods. One great allurements of religious employment to women is, that it affords an outlet for those warm and overflowing affections, which, in the case of the unmarried, have sometimes but few earthly objects on which to expend themselves. Let the question of marriage be entirely set aside in the organization of women's labour. Nobody can tell whether Phoebe, Persis, Dorcas, Tryphena, and Tryphosa, etc., were married or not.

We deprecate, also, any unnecessary interference with dress—i.e., the assumption of any particular costume. In the first place, dress is an index to the character—an index which we do not think it wise to dispense with in any class of women. In the second place, a woman who surrenders the choice of her dress, surrenders a great means of usefulness among her own sex—the usefulness of a good example. It is far more easy to adopt a costume than to withstand foolish fashions. It may be said, the influence of religious women has proved totally inefficacious to stay the flood of folly in matters pertaining to dress in our day. If it has, certainly the adoption of a particular costume would produce no better effect; in fact, under these circumstances, the influence of example is altogether lost. A woman's regulation of her dress is part of her duty as a Christian; the Apostle gives her rules for it. It has been said, also, that women, left free to choose their own dress, would spend too much time upon it. Such women cannot have learned the rudiments of those laws of Christianity, obedience to which alone can fit them for a life of religious usefulness. Another argument is, a peculiar dress inspires confidence in a sick room. That is a matter of opinion. We confess, ourselves, we should feel quite the reverse; and so, we think, would the poor. We would rather be nursed by a person not marking, by any particular habiliment, a separation from ourselves in the duties and trials, the joys and sorrows of social life. The spirit of Christianity is pre-eminently a social spirit; our Lord did not give us the example of any separation from the world of this nature; and, we think, He does not teach His followers to practise such.

What do we want, then? What do we claim in behalf of womanhood? To help in the missionary and charitable work which men have already undertaken, and to add to it such objects as may be peculiarly suitable to our sex; such, for instance, as nursing the sick, teaching women their domestic duties, etc. We want women to be

allowed to render their fair share of help ; not the volunteer, and but too often desultory, help of those who have only to fill up, according to their own inclination, their leisure hours ; but the recognized, efficient help of those whose business it is, to the due discharge of which their life is devoted. Except, however, as the clergyman's wife, the missionary's wife, an Englishwoman—and let us remember how large is the number in our country of those who, the Apostle tells us, are the most free to attend upon the service of Lord without distraction, the unmarried—has no fixed or responsible duty in the Church open to her. If, indeed, as we have before said, she happens to have money and time at her own disposal, she may volunteer a few services ; but, after all, these services can be but small in comparison with those of the regular labourer. “Ah !” said one of this class once to a more favoured individual, “how happy you are ! You have a portion of the Lord's work assigned to you, a place in the household. I am only like the little errand-boy, who runs here and there on a job occasionally !”

MEDITATIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

II.

“Hallowed be thy name.”—Matt. vi. 9.

THE name of the Lord is that by which He makes Himself known to us in His holy word, or it signifies those titles which he has been pleased to assume, in order to represent his character and perfections. He is called Jehovah, to express His necessary self-existence ; God, as the object of religious worship ; and Lord, as declarative of His supreme dominion. But under whatever name He has condescended to reveal Himself, that name is to be revered and adored.

In saying “Hallowed be thy name,” we are in effect taught to consider it as sacred and holy, and to pray that it may be glorified. The Lord sanctifies us by making us holy ; but when we sanctify the Lord of Hosts, it is by making Him our fear, and our dread. By manifesting His own glory, and executing His judgments in the earth, God that is holy is sanctified in righteousness. But when we hallow His sacred name, it is by ascribing righteousness to our Maker, and praying that He may be worshipped and adored by all. And though He is our Father, yet His name is great and terrible,

and must be treated with the deepest reverence and awe. In our ordinary conversation, His sacred name must never be taken on our lips in a light and thoughtless manner. This indeed is a dictate of natural religion: the very heathens trembled before their gods, which indeed were no gods: much more may we fear, who profess to know and worship the true and living God. The ancient Jews held the Lord so sacred, that they would not suffer their children to pronounce it until they were seven years of age, and the name of Jehovah they did not presume to utter. An irreverent use of this most holy name, is utterly inconsistent with the fear and love of God: nothing is more strictly forbidden, or more strongly marks the character of an unbeliever. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." The exclamations of the thoughtless in common conversation, by which they would be supposed to invoke the divine blessing, or make an appeal to the Omniscient, are truly shocking to a pious ear, and cannot be too freely censured, "Let your communications be yea, yea: nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." And it is not a little shocking sometimes to hear, with what irreverent freedom, and thoughtless repetition, some religious people use the sacred name in their prayers, forgetting that even here it is profane. Oh, "our Father, hallowed be thy name!"

If we be the children of God, we shall be concerned to sanctify His holy name in our religious principles, as well as in our daily conversation. Nothing is a more certain criterion of truth and error, than the tendency of any sentiment to do honour or dishonour to the divine character; and nothing serves more fully to manifest the real state of our hearts, than the perception we have of such a tendency, and the feelings with which it is regarded. If the subjects of true religion, we shall be careful to admit no principle which impugns the moral government of God, or weakens our obligations to obedience; every such idea will be felt to be impious and profane. Every attempt to set Moses and Christ at variance, or to represent the grace of God our Saviour as invalidating the claims of God the lawgiver; every principle which supposes that God can, in any sense, be the author of sin, or that the liberty of the gospel is a liberty to commit iniquity, and whatever denies or calls in question the equity of His providence, or the sovereignty of His grace, is alike abhorrent from the fear and love of God. That which represents the divine character as just as well as merciful, as merciful as well

as just, as faithful, and yet abundantly gracious, will be affectionately received and delighted in, if we hallow His holy name, and desire to see it rendered amiable and glorious in the eyes of all His creatures.

The same disposition is to accompany and regulate all our devotions, and all our intercourse with God. Here we shall feelingly exclaim, "Hallowed be thy name!" In prayer especially it is of great importance to have a proper sense of God's infinite purity and holiness: without this, we can never pray as we ought, nor be accepted in His sight. Israel was charged to keep their distance at the foot of the mount, and the priests which come near the Lord were required to sanctify themselves, lest the Lord should break forth upon them; and this holy distance and solemn dread is required in all our approaches to the mercy seat. Much of this spirit may be seen in Abraham's intercession for Sodom, in Solomon's intercession for Israel, and in all the prayers of the saints. The presumptuous, indeed, rush into the divine presence, like the unhallowed sons of Aaron, who offered strange fire and were consumed; but the truly humble and devout will seek for grace to worship acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Every thing distracting, noisy, turbulent, is equally remote from the spirit of true devotion, and will be carefully avoided by all who love the sacred name. In proportion as we are impressed with a sense of the divine purity and glory, we are fitted for communion with God. By seeing how holy He is, we are made to feel our own vileness, to despair of acceptance in any other way than through a mediator, and to wonder how God can have any fellowship with us; and the more we feel of this, the greater nearness shall we enjoy.

Of all the petitions which compose this short prayer, "Hallowed be thy name" is put first, to teach us that the glorifying of God must be our first object, in all our prayers, labours, and enjoyments, and a supreme regard to this is the distinguishing evidence of pure and undefiled religion. Before we ask for daily bread, or the pardon of our sins, we are to desire that His holy name may be glorified; and in asking for these things, the same end must be kept in view. All temporal blessings, and all spiritual blessings, including the salvation of our souls, are to be sought in subordination to the divine glory. And when this is the case, there is no blessing that His goodness will withhold: the glory of God is the most powerful of

all pleas, and will avail when no other plea is heard. Whatever we seek in this way shall never be sought in vain. This is at once the measure of our faith, the ground of our hope, and the rule of duty. "Father, glorify thy name," was the prayer of the only begotten Son. "Father, hallowed be thy name," is the prayer of all the family.

THE CHURCH CLOCK'S MESSAGE TO THOSE AROUND.

(Continued from page 102.)

AND as the hours of repose are curtailed in one part, so are they lengthened in another. The blinds of these houses remain lowered, and the windows shrouded with heavy curtains, until the sun rides high in the heavens. Oh, ye who love sloth, and who linger on in slumber until my warning notes have swelled to nearly their full extent, what answer will ye give to your Lord when He shall demand of you an account of that inestimable talent which He has lent you—Time?

And how is the day occupied by such as these? The husbands and sons of these families are for the most part wholly occupied with the pursuit of wealth and riches, of rank and station, of honour and power. Are such objects satisfying? Hear the testimony of one who rose to the possession of the highest honours the world can bestow. He enjoyed the favour and confidence of his sovereign, he filled the most important offices in Church and State, he revelled in the abundance of his possessions. But his riches took to themselves wings and flew away, his power and glory departed from him, his monarch's favour was withdrawn; and hear his dying testimony:—"Had I served my God but half as faithfully as I have served my king, He would not have given me over in my gray hairs." Upon all his earthly prospects might be inscribed, "Ichabod!" and he had nothing left wherein he might trust. Do you, can you wish your last end like his? You cannot. Then let not your life resemble his. Seek not to heap together "uncertain riches," but rather lay up treasures on high. Desire not high rank among men, nor strive after earthly power; but see to it that you inherit a throne and a kingdom at the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ with His saints.

And how is it with the female part of the community? An aimless drive, an idle stroll in some fashionable promenade, whiles

away a portion of the leaden-footed hours. A foolish tale, a vitiating novel, occupies (may I use the term?) another part; while the enervated limbs of the fair readers recline on luxurious couches or downy *fauteuils*. The *toilette*, pampering the appetite, useless needlework, these are some of the desultory employments of the short day. And on the return of evening, the frail body is again decked out in costly and too often unbecoming raiment, and these foolish time-wasters are whirled away to pass the night, as has been already described.

This is a dark picture; but there are bright lights shining from its sombre background. Some there are who, "knowing the time," have renounced their part in the giddy whirl of pleasure, and are seeking to employ the talents with which they are endowed, for "Him who died for them and rose again."

Are you among this latter class? If so, thank God and take courage. As my swiftly succeeding chimes strike upon your ear, let them stimulate you to renewed exertion, by suggesting the thought, "I am an hour nearer to the judgment." Yes, you are so much nearer to the time when you must give an account of your stewardship. You have much to do, and very little time in which to labour, for "the night cometh." When tempted to relax in your efforts, and to take your ease with the world, let your answer be, as Nehemiah's of old, "I have a great work to do, so that I cannot come down." Then turn upon the tempter and say, "Come thou rather with us, and we will do thee good."

But perhaps you are still in bondage to the world. If so, let my voice persuade you, while yet you may, to "cast away the works of darkness, and put upon you the armour of light." Have you ever been satisfied with the enjoyments of the world? Have you found its pleasures real and substantial? I am sure you have not. Oh, then, cast in your lot with the people of God now, for my hands stand nearly upright; the "night is far spent, the day is at hand."

Bereaved one, mourning the loss of one whom you will never again behold in the flesh, let my ever-revolving hands remind you that—

"Time is going, time is going,
Like a stream that's ever flowing."

My pendulum will soon cease to vibrate, time will speedily be lost in eternity, and you will be re-united to those you love in the heavenly mansion.

To the aged—with tremulous hand and feeble step, with furrowed brow and silvery hair—whose time of departure is at hand, let my voice be heard as a solemn monitor, for soon my bell will strike your last hour, and my unwearied finger point to your last earthly moment. Happy are you if, in expectation of that hour when “this mortal shall put on immortality,” you can say with the sweet singer of Israel, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

A word to the young, and I have done. It is yet morning with you. But two or three hours are as yet marked upon your dial-plate. The greater part of your life is probably before you. Oh, give it to God! Seek Him early, and He will assuredly be found of you. Give Him your heart now, in all the freshness and vigour of youth, and you will not hereafter have to mourn over time mis-spent and wasted, nor to cry, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!”

MRS. ELIZABETH MONTAGU.

“SHE was now in her maturity, of the middle stature, with a slight stoop, so that the fire of her beautiful deep blue eyes was somewhat subdued by an air of modesty; her dark brown hair clustering over her throat and face; her high arched eyebrows; her complexion, notwithstanding the attacks made on it by the envious, singularly brilliant and yet delicate, completed the charms of her person; her manners as dignified as they were polished: with all these advantages she may have been sought by the wisest and best men (who have never any objection to youth and beauty) of her time. The scholar and the politician, the wit, the critic, the orator, crowded around her. Her wit was so abundant, so fresh, so involuntary, that she found it difficult to temper it, and to adapt it to society. But her extreme good nature and good breeding brought it under control. It was never coarse, never disagreeable. She could curb it at the right point. The gaiety of her disposition, her love of society, never drew her into folly. Discreet, correct, the admiration felt for her was that which we feel for purity and elevation of mind.”—*The Queens of Society.*

R E S T .

A Sermon,

DELIVERED AT VICTORIA TERRACE WESLEYAN CHAPEL,
PORTLAND TOWN ST. JOHN'S WOOD,

On Wednesday, October 17, 1860.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON.

LONDON: JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,
NORTH SIDE ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, AND PATERNOSTER-ROW.

No. 3,519

P

REST.

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—Psalm cxvi. 7.

THERE is nothing which more wonderfully displays the might, and power, and wisdom of the great Creator than the human mind. "The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament sheweth forth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Traces of his presence are visible upon the fair face of nature; the ocean gives us impressions of his power; but the mind, above all other created objects, is fraught with the evidences of Divine intelligence, and oft we have wandered delightedly among the monuments of creative energy, and in joy and in awe have heard the voice that tells of the Most High. We gaze upon the mind when it is what it ought to be, and what the Gospel of God would make it, and we observe, so far as it is permitted to humanity to remark upon things so sacred, "This is the climax; here the whole Deity we behold." Amongst the characteristics which pre-eminently distinguish the mind, the power of self-communion is not the least worthy. There are secret chambers in the soul—council-rooms of thought and feeling—where it can either revel in unsuspected wickedness, or hold solemn converse with the things that are above. There is, as might naturally be expected, a very marked and considerable difference between these inward meditations of the Christian and those of the man of the world. The latter may, perchance, be in affluent circumstances, and a luxurious liver, surrounded by everything which the world prescribes as necessary to his happiness, and at the close of a day of dissipation he enters into himself, and addresses his immortal spirit, and Scripture has told us what he says: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" while the former, a changed man, both in heart and life, unmindful of everything that would hinder his spirit's welfare, hallows the night season by communing with his own heart upon his bed, and, in the exercise of a grateful and generous piety, addresses his soul, but he does it in the words of the text, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

The Psalm out of which these words are taken is of unknown authorship, but is generally supposed to have been written immediately after the return from the Babylonish captivity, and to be a song of deliverance for that joyful event. In an evangelical sense, it may be well described to be the believer's thanksgiving for deliverance from the yet more hideous and unnatural bondage of sin. In this sense we may find in it matter for great profitable meditation, by considering, first, the fact that is asserted, and then the exhortation which is grounded upon it,—“The Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee”—that is the fact—therefore “return unto thy rest, O my soul.”

There is a very singular happiness, I take it, in the choice of the word here, “bountifully,” inasmuch as it is expressive at once of the beneficence and of the sovereignty of God. Bounty, you know, is a benefaction from rank and affluence to those that are in necessitous circumstances; and in order that it be distributed, it is necessary that there should be an avowal of distress, and it is necessary that there should be application for relief. The case of the penitent sinner surely is a case which is parallel; none ever obtained salvation without personally applying for the boon. There must be deep and pungent sorrow for sin, an utter renunciation of all self-constituted agencies, and a firm confidence in the merits of Christ. But the world does not like this; self is left out of the question; man has absolutely nothing to do with the meritorious procurement of his own salva-

tion; the pride of his heart rebels and regards it as an insult that is not to be borne. Pride would rear the fabric of its fancied safety upon its own merits, and would then exclaim, as it walked in the palace, "This is great Babylon which I have built for the house of the king." God will not, on any consideration, lower the standard of his will, or hamper the free course of the atonement with the frail and tangled network of human merit; the sinner remains unsaved; the guilt of rejecting the Gospel is added to the catalogue of former crimes, and the man remains in his sins and in his crimes until the fearful consummation, when he is filled with his own ways. Very different is the spirit of the man whose heart God has touched; he remembers his iniquity, and his sin is ever before him; he has not forgotten the rock whence he has been hewn, nor the hole of the pit whence he has been so marvellously digged; and, content to acknowledge that, from first to last, from the commencement to the termination of his Christian pilgrimage, from the first germ of grace to the full flower of growth, his salvation has been altogether of God, he can join even now in the song which comes loud and swelling from the heavenly host, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory." The state of a believer has been very aptly defined to be "a state of perpetual penitence, without the sting of penitence." There are ideas of weakness in his soul, but yet they are not alone; they are associated with ideas of that fulness which he has invoked, and which is promised to uphold. He has feebleness still; but then he has feebleness leaning upon an omnipotent arm. He is a worm, and, in the dying language of the immortal Richard Watson, "The worm crawls out of its hole in the earth, and basks in the sunshine of the garden of the Lord." The combination of these ideas of weakness and power, and the inter-action of their several collaterals upon his mind, have a tendency to arouse his confidence in no ordinary degree, and to cause him to cry with a glad heart and free spirit, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

I. But, if you want to know more of the special grounds of thanksgiving, we do not know that we can do better than to give you the division which the Psalmist has given us ready to our hand in the next verse of the Psalm, which, you perceive, brings him forth before the believer's mind in his several characters of Redeemer, and Consoler, and Preserver. "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." God is brought before the believer's mind, in his character of Redeemer. When our first parents were guilty of that strange and fatal act of disobedience to God, their condition in the universe became entirely changed. Justice, under whose high sanction they had been accustomed to live securely, became their inexorable foe; the law thundered out its anathemas against them, and God's character seemed to be committed in the sight of the universe to put man to death; the law remained firm and inflexible, and seemed to be satisfied with nothing short of the penalty, and then was enunciated that original law, "Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin." Then it was that through the dense darkness of the fall there gleamed the jettings of celestial light, and in the very moment of transgression there was mercy in the councils of the Eternal; the Son was to come into the world; the Divine and the human were to blend in mysterious union; the man Christ Jesus was to die; his death was to be the accepted ransom to all that had faith in his merits; the sinner might be free. Such was the Godlike scheme which was then propounded, and which in the fulness of time was carried into successful effect. Christ did come into the world to endure the contradiction of sinners against himself, and at length suffered "without the gate." Oh, that was a memorable moment when the Redeemer cried out that his Father had forsaken him. Nature groaned in sympathetic travail, for the soul of her Lord was sorrowful even unto death; but in that agonizing instant there was a joy set before him, for the sake of which he endured the cross, and for the sake of which he despised the shame. He looked through the vista of succeeding time, and

saw the sun-track of the Gospel chariot ; he saw the Spirit, the purchase of his blood, working mightily upon the intellect and upon the consciences of men ; he traced in the lineaments of each penitent soul the broad features of Jehovah's glory ; he saw the world bright with the colours of an immortal hope—the hope of the glory of God ; he looked on, and in prophetic vision saw the uttermost parts of the earth his possession, and the world itself his footstool, and then he lifted the drapery and extended the vision, keen and piercing, into eternity ; and there, in multitudes of redeemed spirits ransomed in glory before the throne of God, he beheld the consummation of the thrilling and bursting joy that was the joy set before him ; and because of this joy, he said, " It is finished," and he died. There was deep meaning in these last words of the Saviour, " It is finished." What is finished ? Has he attained the consummation of his sufferings ? Have his enemies done their worst ? They gloated malignantly over his agonies, and they hunted him to the death. Can they do no more ? Has he attained the consummation of his sufferings ? Yes, and also the consummation of his purpose ? Redemption was finished, justice was satisfied. What a death-blow to the powers of darkness ! There were there, troops of them, exulting demons crushing around the cross, the fell fiend gloating over the anticipated ruin of millions, Death poising his dart unerringly, Hell moving from beneath to meet its victims, which were coming ; but God thwarts them. The covenant with death was disannulled, the agreement with hell did not stand, Christ died and abolished death for ever, and the kingdom of heaven, in all its blessedness and plenteousness, was opened unto all believers.

There are two lights in which we may regard Christ here—as a Conqueror who has abolished death, and as the Forerunner, too—the representative who will lead us in the path of life. If you take the first thought and view him as the Conqueror, how mighty was the triumph that he gained ! Till that time death had reigned over the universe with despotic and remorseless tyranny. Christ took hold of this unmitigated evil, he threw the savour into the fountain of bitterness, and there gushed out waters of blessing and of life. That was a memorable time that succeeded the crucifixion ; all that had happened above had been silenced ; the execrations of the multitude had died away ; the living had returned to their accustomed habitations, the city subsided to its wonted tranquillity ; but below there was a strange scene going on. The King of Terrors sat in the charnel upon his throne of skulls, and he had an unwonted subject there—one whom he never expected to have seen, one whom he could not hope to hold in those his dark domains. The Prince of Life and of Peace lay stretched out in strange and awful slumber : oh ! but the marvel was soon over ; the flesh of the Holy One revolted, shrunk away from corruption, and in triumph the Redeemer rose. There was the consummation of the redeeming scheme ; he was declared to be the Son of God, with power, by the resurrection from the dead. The powers of hell were defeated on every side, and were only rendered more baffled and more frenzied than ever. We may well imagine them addressing the Son in the language of one of their tribe, " What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God ? art thou come *hither* also ? Thou hast driven us from the earth, is not that enough ? Thou hast not allowed us to have any part or lot among the beings whom thou hast ransomed ; this is our own place, the metropolis of our own empire—art thou come *hither* ? is there not even safety here ? art thou come *hither* also to torment us before the time ?" The resurrection of the Saviour might perhaps have been endured ; they could have survived that, they could have got over that ; they never expected to hold him captive in durance vile ; but oh ! that rising was only the type of the great Easter of universal creation—was only the first forthputting of that mighty power that should afterwards exterminate the authority of darkness, cause songs of praise to echo from the fragments of the fallen sepulchre, and finish the mystery of God by casting death and hell into the lake of fire. Brethren, who does not say, as we talk about all these things, as we

bring before you this glorious redemption—who does not say, “Talk of immortality to man! the theme is not congenial; what has he to do with things so sacred and so high? Is not his brow wrinkled with anxiety? is not his cheek furrowed with care? is not his very soul as ignoble as the dust upon which he treads? is not he a sordid earthworm, with scarcely a desire or a hope beyond the horizon that bounds his prospect?” Now all this is true, and much more; it is hardly possible to put poor human nature down too low; and yet fettered, prostrate, tarnished as it is down in the dust and on the dunghill, that humanity is the heir of immortality and the favoured child of heaven notwithstanding. And all this immensity of blessing is suspended upon the one simple and practical condition of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Then how should the believer be encouraged! what will death be to him as he passes through the decline of life—as he approaches the parting hour—as the affliction has stricken him—as the sombre silence of awe, broken only by muttered prayers and stifled weeping, tells him that his case is hopeless, and that nothing remains for him but to turn his face against the wall and die, if he can lift up his withered arm and cry in the promptitude and decision of a steadfast faith, “I have no fear; I may have to go through the valley; I may have to combat with an enemy—the shadow of an enemy—but thou, Lord, hast overcome in my behalf; thou, Lord, hast abolished death, and hast brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel.” Yes, and when we have followed to the grave those whose memories are blessed, and whose names, like faded roses, have their fragrance still, we can leave them in the exercise of this same majestic hope, coming from the mournful spectacle that has made the very heart to shudder within us, and the dust has returned to the dust, and we can sing—

“Thou art gone to the grave, but we will not deplore thee,
Though shadows and darkness encompass the tomb,
For the Saviour hath passed through its portals before thee,
And the lamp of his love is thy guide through the gloom.”

And then take the other thought—view the Saviour as the representative of humanity, and there is something grand and inspiring in that thought, too. It has been well observed, supposing that, with our present knowledge of the might and majesty of the great Eternal, we were to stand trembling upon the brink of a shoreless eternity, with no revelation to give us an inkling of what is beyond; supposing we were to die, and so to go naked into the presence of the Holy One, where never humanity had ventured before—oh, with what trembling hesitancy should we take the plunge! what a deeper darkness would settle over the valley of the shadow of death! how little better would our state be than that of the practical infidel, who told his friends, when he was parting, that he was taking a leap in the dark! But, brethren, we need not be brought to any such condition, or reduced to any such alternative; humanity has been in the presence chamber of the Holy One; the man Christ Jesus took it there, and he went into the other world that he might travel all the way that we had subsequently to travel, and that he might be the representative of our humanity, that he might make our nature free, so to speak, of the citizenship of that better land, so that there should be nothing strange or unfamiliar when our trembling feet were first treading the eternal shore; but that we might see the Man at the right hand, and recognising our own nature in the person of our Forerunner, go triumphantly in with boldness to claim the crown, through Christ our Lord. Brethren, one intelligent writer says that it is the grand characteristic of a responsible creature that he should have a sense of possession. What possession is there at all comparable to this—immortality in reversion, and the blessed earnest of it in hand? Why, the Christian even now bears marks of his paternity; he is not of the roll of common men. Look at him! you can tell him from others if he is of the right stamp, if he bears the ink mark, if he is of the proper currency, if he

is not forged and counterfeited, and hypocritical, you can tell him from others; in his veins there flows a current of richer blood, from his eye there sparkles a genius of richer illumination, his heart is the centre of a more hallowed light; he tells us plainly that he is a Christian—he has no motive to disguise it—nay, that he has risen with Christ, and lives in the land which is prepared for him by his Father above. “Thou wilt show me the path of life.” Oh, the beauty of that promise; you ask us sometimes to tell you what our ideas of the recompense are; we cannot definitely; but we know this, that to be loosed off from mortality is to be with Christ. The Forerunner meets all who subsequently come, just as a guide that has explored the passage comes back to conduct strangers through its intricacy. Thus he shows us the path of life; through all its windings he has been; we should lose our way in the devious labyrinths of the other world, if it were not for him; but he is the Forerunner, and he guides our inexperienced feet, and bids his angels hold us up in their hands, lest we should dash our feet against a stone. You ask us what we mean by the glory, and honour, and immortality, that we allege we shall receive. We cannot tell, we answer you perfectly, we cannot tell it; but it is all comprised in the felicities of heavenly companionship, an ever-growing knowledge of holiness and everlasting life. Brethren, this is your heritage; stretch out your hands and grasp it; let the habit of your lives be the habit in which you shall be prepared to die, so that, when the death-pang does seize you, you may cry amid the throes of dissolving nature, “Thou, Lord, wilt show me the path of life; the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me.” It is very manifest that we cannot do justice to anything like the thoughts that are suggested by this subject; I can just briefly give you the very heads of thought, and barely these, in reference to the other topics connected with the text.

II. God is brought before the believer's mind as his Consoler. “Thou hast delivered mine eyes from tears.” “Many are the sorrows of the righteous.” One reads that passage so far and stops, and turns away and says, Oh, what a melancholy system! how clothed in sackcloth! how its hymns are all wailing and doleful psalms! how cypress is there instead of the laurel or the bay! how everything is gloomy! You cannot expect us to forego the pleasures and enjoyments of the present for such a doleful prospect as that—“Many are the sorrows of the righteous.” Their own book says so. “But the Lord delivereth him out of them all,” that is the other part; and the world leaves that out, cuts the passage, mutilates it in order to suit its own purpose, and in order to furnish it with excuses for neglecting the Gospel claims. “The Lord delivereth him out of them all.” If it were possible for you to heap together, in one vast gloomy congregation, all the evils that can possibly afflict the Christian, whether those to which he is liable in common with others, or those which have their sanctuary and their banquet in the recesses of his own heart, or those to which he has become exposed on account of his Christian profession, piled one upon another like so many tiers of Alps above it, he can say to that vast Alpine range of sorrow, “Who art thou, O mountain, that exaltest thyself against the Lord our God? before our Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.” “Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.”

There are two or three ways in which this may be done. The eyes are delivered from tears, because in every trial it is shown that there is a kind and sympathising Friend. How grateful kindness is when it comes bubbling in all the freshness of sincerity from the unsullied fountain of a friend's heart! There is not a sorrow that it cannot alleviate, nor a joy that it cannot intensify; and here we have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, one who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, because he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. That is a poor fellow-feeling, you know, which is the result of education rather than experience. You cannot teach a man anywhere to sympathise in the distresses of a

fellow-man. If he would know the heat of the furnace you must put him through the flame, and so Christ has been. His visage was marred more than any man's; he hungered and thirsted, wept, bled, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There is not a pang sharp of agony that lacerates you that did not lacerate him before you, and he was in all points tempted like as you are, and yet without sin. He is able to sympathise, therefore; and many a time, as, you know, it is in earthly companionship, the society and the soothing of a friend delivers the eyes from tears; the tears flow gently down, and do not scald as they fall, when a friend's sympathising voice is heard; so when Jesus comes to the believer's rescue, his sorrow is but as an element of strength and comfort, soothed down into a pensive feeling by the presence of him who has redeemed and will deliver him. And then the eyes are delivered from tears also, because every trial is shown to have its own appropriate end. Trials come not by chance, but are the wise and merciful interpositions of an Almighty hand. The Christian is assured of this; he learns this in the school of Christ, even in the rudimentary part of his education. Knowing that in some way or other his own benefit is involved; he endeavours to find out the hidden lesson which is meant for him—whether to repress the giant growth of selfishness, whether to impress him with a tenderness for the wants and woes of others, whether to win his spirit from the world and attach him more closely to the skies, whether to exemplify the honourable and noble grace of resignation—in some way or other he is sure his benefit is involved; and while poor, unthinking people come, and in ribald wit are scoffing at him, and saying—"Persecute and attack him, for the Lord hath forsaken him, the wrath of God is heavy upon him," he bends meekly. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; for if we be without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons."

III. And then in the third place, God is presented to the believer's mind as his Preserver. "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." To be sustained under the curse we must have the same strength as that by which we were originally brought into the enjoyment of the blessing. We cannot keep ourselves for one moment; we cannot of ourselves enter upon life; we cannot sustain ourselves amid the world's ruggedness and temptation and difficulty without the constant protection of a Divine hand. "Thou hast preserved my feet from falling." It is just this ever-present guidance of God that makes the difference between a strong and a timid Christian. The timid Christian sends out—to use an illustration that is very familiar—sends out spies into the land of Canaan, hears largely of its fertility and beauty, very ardently desires it as an inheritance for ever; but then the tall sons of Anak are there, and the cities are walled and very great, and the people are a feeble folk, and the enemy a great multitude; and under the pressure of these giant-like difficulties the man is content to remain in the wilderness, cropping the scanty herbage by the side of the tangled path, when he might be luxuriating among the grapes of Eschol and among the vintage of Zion. While the strong man, the man whose faith is strong, who relies on God's promises, he sends out his spies into the land of Canaan too, and they bring back the same report, and say it is true: the tall sons of Anak are there, and they are very tall—he does not underestimate the stature of these sons of the giants one cubit—the tall sons of Anak are there, and the cities are walled and very great, and it would be a very formidable thing to take; they tell him of the difficulties; nothing is gained by concealing the truth or by representing that it is all sunshine and calm, rest and peace, in the way to the kingdom of heaven—nothing is gained by that. The spies are true men, and they tell the story just as it is. Then the man looks into himself and looks upward to his God, and sees the finger which originally called him in the way, beckoning to him from the cloud, and he says to himself, "If the Lord delight in me, he will surely bring me up hence;" and then he turns round and acts with courage, goes into the midst of his

grovelling companions and says, "Let us go up and possess the good land, for we are well able to overcome it." "One routs a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight," and, more than conquerors, they enter into the possession of the rest.

Now, brethren, you are ready for the exhortation of the text, which ought to have come long ago; but we have been lingering upon the privilege until we have hardly any time for the duty, but I hope the practice will testify to your intense application of that, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." Where can the soul rest except in him who is the Redeemer, Consoler, and Preserver? If he has delivered your soul from death, and your eyes from tears, and your feet from falling, there can be no rest but in him. The rest of the soul, you know, was the problem of the old world. They formed ideas upon it which were but as a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then fadeth away. Pleasure, with her ever-changing flashes and hues, was represented as the rest of the soul; but they lied—they lied—who said it. The soul could not rest in any of these, which are like the restless and ever-heaving ocean, which can never be stilled except by him that appointed its habitation, and fixed the bounds which it can never pass—God is the only rest of the soul. This return to it implies that you have wandered. Is it so? Has there been an idol in your affection—a compromise in your practice—something that has been unworthy and impure? You have wandered; then return unto your rest or there is no happiness for you. You see that dove speeding over the waste wilderness of waters, finding no rest for the sole of its foot. How it curves round and round that one lone rock of shelter that floats, a solitary spot upon the world drowned in the tempest of Divine displeasure, until at last the lattice is opened, the patriarch's hand is extended, and the dove flutters feebly in! Thou art that dove if thou art away from Jesus. Oh, who does not say to-day,—

"Take my poor fluttering soul to rest,
And lodge it safely in thy breast?"

Do you see that pining captive yonder, disconsolate, weeping his tears into the mirror of the river there, in which are reflected the shadow of the terraces and towers of Babylon, that poor harp, unstrung and mute, hanging upon the willows? His heart is sad because his soul is so feeble and sore broken that it cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. Thou art that Israelite if thou art away from Christ. Oh, let the captive exile hasten to be loosed to-night, and come back to his inheritance and to his home. "Return unto thy rest"—this is God's invitation to the Israelite, God's invitation to those who have partially forsaken him. "Return unto thy rest:" let each one of you say it to yourselves, let each one of you put it in practice, and by the grace of God may each one of you realize to-night the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

Sketches and Essays.

FEMALE PIETY.*

"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

THOUGH this stands last, it is very far from being least. Nay, mark well its position. It does not come in along with the rest, as forming one of them merely. It is a designation which includes in it all the rest. It is the sum of the whole. The woman described is "the woman that feareth the Lord;" and "the woman that feareth the Lord" is the woman described. Her fearing the Lord is the productive germ and pervading principle of the whole character; so that, when the rest of it has been drawn, and it is asked, Where is such a character to be found? the answer is, It is the character of the "woman that feareth the Lord"—of every woman who is really under the influence of true religion. And this naturally suggests two observations, which may be of use to different classes of my hearers. There may be external conformity to a number of the features of the character here described—such as conjugal fidelity, and every attention to a husband's and family's comfort and well-being—exemplary industry—modest and becoming apparel, and discreet and prudent management—while yet there may be no piety—no true religion. I should wish to impress the minds of such persons with the conviction, that, although the presence of such features of character and courses of conduct are vastly better for the temporal comfort and happiness of a family than their absence, yet, in the sight of God, and in His estimate of character, they are miserably defective, and even worthless, without this. In woman, as in man, godliness is what He first demands. Where the heart is not right with God, all is wrong. There are domestic scenes to be

* From "Lectures on the Book of Proverbs." By the Rev. RALPH WARDLAW, D.D. Edited by his Son, the Rev. J. S. WARDLAW, A.M. Edinburgh: A. Fullarton and Co. 1861.

witnessed, presenting much that is amiable, and much that seems happy—much of mutual affection, mutual cheerfulness, and mutual desire and promptitude to serve one another, to anticipate one another's wishes, and to promote one another's welfare—where religion has no place; where there is no domestic altar erected to God; where God's fear does not preside; where there is nothing beyond the dictate of natural affection. There are wives who, in all respect but this, set a becoming example, and seem almost all that you could wish them to be; and whose happy influence in the domestic circle is felt by every inmate, and manifest to every eye. O how deeply one cannot but regret, in such cases, the absence of the “one thing needful”—the absence of God! He is not there. There is not the semblance of family religion. God's goodness is unacknowledged. God's blessing is unsought. God's love is unfelt. God's authority is unrecognised. There is neither the secret devotion of the closet, nor the social devotion of the domestic church. It is a scene of seeming enjoyment, and yet it is a scene of atheism—of practical atheism. It is one of the many manifestations of “the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God,” in which He withdraws not the fruits of His kindness, even although His hand is neither seen nor owned in their bestowment. And, still further, the amiable exercise of the domestic affections, and discharge of the domestic duties, may be trusted in as the righteousness and the recommendation of the wife and the mother—while the idea of self-renunciation and reliance on grace alone, through the blood of atonement, is indignantly rejected! We cannot fail, I repeat, deeply to lament the miserable defectiveness of all this, and the dishonour done by it to an excluded God. We sigh over the want. We say, O were God but there! were the scene of natural amiableness, and domestic peace and cheerfulness, only hallowed by the presiding and pervading influence of the spirit of piety! Men of the world think this would spoil the scene; Christians think it would perfect it. What a strange, false, unworthy conception of true religion must that be, which fancies it the bane of social happiness—which imagines the entrance of God spoiling enjoyment! It only shows what erroneous conceptions of enjoyment and happiness are prevalent in the world. What can that happiness be, which God would spoil! to which piety would put an end! Is either personal or domestic happiness worthy of the name, of which this is true?

Let all professors of religion, on the other hand, bear in mind, that there is no genuine piety that is not practical—personally and socially practical. True religion must tell upon the character, and that in all its departments; and nowhere more than in the domestic circle. It is here that men and women appear in what may be called the undress of life. It is of the female character that I now speak. Now, as a woman may array herself in the garb of her Sabbath finery when she goes abroad, and be an untidy slattern at home; so may the appearances of religion, both by men and women, be assumed in public, and before the eyes of others, whilst at the domestic fireside all its amiable and lovely influence is laid by. I have no notion of this. Let me see men and women in the bosom of their families. What are they there? It is not what they are at church; or what they are in the drawing-room or the convivial party; or even what they are in the fellowship meeting where prayer is wont to be made; but what are they at home? Much may go on there, of which the world knows nothing. Let me see the piety, the practical working piety, that displays itself in the mutual interchange of the kindly affections there, and in the fond and faithful fulfilment of all the relative obligations of duty and of love. I have no idea of a godly woman that is not a good wife, a good mother, a good mistress. She cannot be pious as a woman, while she is careless as a wife and a mother, and unkind and unjust as a mistress. There is such a character as a spiritual gossip—a gad-about after sermons and religious meetings—a mighty talker, or a whining complainer of all that will not spend their time with her as cold formalists and “wells without water;” while home is neglected, and husband and family left to feel the want. It is a very sad thing when such anomalies in character present themselves to the world—when women, who profess to be fearers of God, are surpassed in domestic amiableness and dutifulness by those who make no pretensions to religion. These things ought not so to be. It is one of the many ways in which professors “lie against the truth.” The truth disowns such characters. “Every one who is of the truth,” Christ says “heareth My voice.” And where does the voice of Christ tell any woman that she may neglect her husband, provided she waits upon God? that she may neglect her family, if she but attends the prayer-meeting? that she may scold and maltreat her servants at her pleasure, if she reads her Bible, and

minds her private devotions? What notions of piety must she have—how utterly perverse and dishonouring to God and to His word, who can act as if such were the case! True piety is ever a practical principle. It consists not in mere notions; nor does it consist in mere religious exercises. It is a prodigious mistake thus to regard the region for the exercise of piety as lying solely in the acts of worship—of immediate communion with God. It is a principle that diffuses its influence over the entire deportment of life; that regulates all its movements; that gives its peculiar character to all its words and all its actions. “The woman that feareth the Lord” will show her fear of the Lord by her active diligence in all her conjugal, maternal, and other domestic duties. She will discharge all these in the spirit of affection, and with constant and persevering assiduity, because they are the injunctions of the God whom she fears; and she will infuse into them all the spirit of her religion—so doing them, as that, “the fear of the Lord” may not be hidden, but may be visible as the spring from which the sweet waters flow.

REST.

“O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.”—
Psalm lv. 6.

At rest! What a comfort it is, after a fatiguing day's work, to be able to lie down, and receive that refreshment which is necessary, in order to perform the duties of life. The Bible declares that there “remaineth a rest for the people of God;” a rest from the temptations of this world, from this sinful nature, from God's enemies, who here assail and fight against those who are on His side. Here we are soon tired, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak;” duty, however pleasant, soon wears us down; and yet we do not look forward enough to this *rest*, prepared for all those who have received the forgiveness of all their many sins through the blood of Christ. Jesus declared, when on this earth, that in His Father's house were many mansions, and that He went before to prepare a place for us.

Reader, are you looking forward with much anxiety for the time when God shall see fit to call you to enjoy *rest*—from all your labours and trials in this world of sorrows, where we are soon wearied, to thy rest in the kingdom prepared for you from the

foundation of the world? or, are you forgetting that Christ has proclaimed a rest, to be enjoyed for a long eternity after His people leave this earth? "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," said Christ. "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

Come! said Jesu's sacred voice,
Come, and make my paths your choice!
I will guide you to your home;
Weary pilgrim, hither come.

Sinner, come, for here is found
Balm that flows for ev'ry wound;
Peace that ever shall endure,
Rest eternal, sacred, sure.

Do you expect to enjoy this sacred rest? Those that believe on the Lord Jesus Christ will enjoy this rest; those that have received remission for all their sins through the cleansing power of Christ's precious blood will enjoy rest. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."—(John iii. 36). Do you, dear reader, believe? or do you say, "I am afraid I am too great a sinner"? Listen, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—(Isaiah i. 18). "Jesus came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "Whosoever will," is Christ's invitation; therefore, He does not consider you, nor any one, too vile to come to Him; but those that come to Him must come in faith, believing "that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him;" "Those that seek me early shall find me." Therefore, if you have not sought Christ and yielded yourself up to Him and His cause, may He bow your stubborn will; for "Behold, *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." It is dangerous to delay seeking salvation, for you know not what an hour may bring forth; before this day is past, you may be numbered with the dead, you may have left this world—which will be either for the place of everlasting torment, in company with the devil and his angels, or to enjoy rest in heaven, there to be continually singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

When shall I reach that happy place,
And be for ever blest?
When shall I see my Father's face,
And in His bosom rest?

Old Jonathan.

JESUS ONLY!

THERE is nothing pure, nothing lovely, nothing of good report, without the dear Redeemer.

“Pure!” Ponder the purity of His life, ponder the purity of His love, ponder well and long the spotlessness of the Lamb of God.

“Lovely!” Talk of lovely flowers? Talk of this lovely world? How soon the flowers fade; how soon the world will be as burned-up Sodom, and pass away as a charred scroll. In heaven their does reign One whose loveliness and glory are unfading. It is Jesus, the altogether lovely! My Saviour! My Intercessor!

“Good report!” What is of good report? The pleasures of sin? Oh, awful thought, dismiss it. Dash away that poison cup, therein is death. What is of good report? High places in the synagogue? Chief rooms at feasts? Oh, false. Who that has not a morbid taste would sigh with the Israelites for the leeks and onions of Egypt instead of the milk and honey of Canaan! For many and many a century had Jacob’s well been of good report, but the time came when the heaven-taught woman of Sychar could risk her pitcher being “broken at the fountain,” while she ran to tell of the glad tidings of the living waters brought by Jesus to thirsting souls.

Precious Saviour! The rock smitten to give water to the thirsty, in a barren and dry land. Alas! that Isaiah had to cry, “Who hath believed our report?” Alas! that prophets, and apostles, and evangelists are so like the faithful Caleb and Joshua, they bring a Good Report, but are not believed.

Oh, the blackness of unbelief, that sees no beauty in Jesus, no attractiveness in the bleeding Lamb!

Jesus for me! Jesus only! Jesus, the theme of my songs, the spring of my joys, the Anchor of my hopes, the Author and Finisher of my faith. Jesus only! Yea, if possible, Jesus for my relations, for my friends, for my neighbours. Oh, that all could say with me, Jesus only!

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When I close these eyes in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne:
Rock of ages cleft for me.
Let me hide myself in thee.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

IV.

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. vi. 10.

THIS petition is a kind of explication of the former; for when the kingdom of God shall come, His will shall be done on earth, as it is in heaven, and His name will be hallowed. There have been some periods in which true religion has greatly prevailed in the earth, but never so as to become universal. In the primitive age, the gospel was preached to every creature, to all nations under heaven; and during the persecutions of the first three centuries, it pervaded every part of the Roman empire; but there has never yet been a period in which this petition has been completely fulfilled. The greater part of mankind have in all ages remained in a state of open rebellion against God. He is the righteous law-giver and governor of the world; but His laws are disregarded, and His authority despised. It is only in a very small part of the earth where the will of God is professedly obeyed; and even where that is the case, it is done but in a very partial and imperfect manner. Besides many who know not their Master's will, there are multitudes who know it and do it not. It is the will of God that we should love Him supremely; love Him as revealed to us in His holy law, in all the glory of His moral excellence, with all the heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. It is the will of God especially that we should love Him and believe in Him, amidst the richer glories of the gospel, where his ineffable character is displayed with the brightest splendour; that we should embrace all that He hath testified in His word, should fulfil all His ordinances, and love one another, as He hath given us commandment. But where shall we look for this conformity to the divine will, this entire subjection of the heart to God?

Nevertheless, we are taught that the holiness of heaven is to be the rule and measure of our desires, at least in reference to our obedience in this world. "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Not indeed that we are required to do the same things on earth, in every respect, as in heaven; for we have many things to do for God in this world, which will not be necessary in the next. The work of preaching the gospel, reading and hearing the word, pitying and relieving the distressed, and many other immediate duties, can find no place in heaven. The will of our Father is various,

adapted to the different branches of His family, to their capacities and circumstances, and the several designs included in His universal government.

But though the duties imposed are not identically the same, the spirit, the motive, and the manner must all be one : and when this petition shall receive its full accomplishment, heaven will be found on earth, and earth will make a part of heaven. In that blessed world, the will of God is performed with cheerfulness and fervency, There are no delays there, no coldness nor languor ; no reluctance, nor one slothful servant in all the family. There all is love, and holy ardour, and sacred delight. "There His servants serve Him. He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers flames of fire." In heaven, the will of God is done universally, by all its inhabitants, and in all its parts. Not an angel or a spirit before the throne that is not ardently engaged in fulfilling the divine commands, and not one jot or tittle of them is suffered to fail. Every intimation of the will of God is instantly obeyed, and they do always that which is well pleasing in His sight. There also the will of God is done incessantly, and without weariness. "There is no night there ;" no seasons of repose or rest. They cease not day and night to cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts ; the whole earth is full of His glory."

And may we hope that His will shall thus be done on earth, as it is in heaven ? Had it been otherwise, we should not have been directed to pray for it. There is a time coming before the end of the world, when this shall be the case in a happy degree ; a time when the people shall be all righteous, shall all know the Lord, and serve Him with one consent. "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord ; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judea shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts ; and all they that sacrifice, shall come and take of them, and seethe therein : and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." There is also a time when this petition shall be still more literally and fully accomplished ; a time which shall follow the general conflagration and the final judgment, when there shall be new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness ; and when this world shall be added to the holy and happy dominions of God. Then, indeed, His will shall be done on earth, as it is in heaven ; "and every creature, which is in heaven ;

and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall be heard saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

How desirable is such an event—how blessed will that time be! The happiness of the whole creation consists in an entire conformity to the will of God, which requires no other than that we should be wholly under the influence of love; of love to Himself, to truth, to righteousness, to all that bear His image, and to all mankind. The want of this fills the world with misery and ruin. Oh what a happy state, if love to God, to parents, to children, to neighbours, to friends, and enemies were everywhere to prevail and abound! Such is the tendency of true religion, and such are the objects which its universal prevalence is intended to accomplish. "Thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

A WISE REBUKE.

THE following anecdote is related of the late excellent Joseph John Gurney, of Norwich, by one who, as a child, was often one of his family circle:—One night—I remember it well—I received a severe lesson on the sin of evil-speaking. Severe I thought it then, and my heart rose in childish anger against him who gave it; but I had not lived long enough in this world to know how much mischief a child's thoughtless talk may do, and how often it happens that talkers run off the straight line of truth. S—— did not stand very high in my esteem, and I was about to speak further of her failings of temper. In a few moments my eye caught a look of such calm and steady displeasure, that I stopped short. There was no mistaking the meaning of that dark, speaking eye. It brought the colour to my face, and confusion and shame to my heart. I was silent for a few moments, when Joseph John Gurney asked, very gravely, "Dost thou know any good thing to tell us of her?" I did not answer: and the question was more seriously asked:—"Think; is there nothing good thou canst tell us of her?" "O, yes; I know some good things, but—" "Would it not have been better, then, to relate those good things, than to have told us that which would lower her in our esteem? Since there is good to relate, would it not be kinder to be silent on the evil? for 'Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity.'"—*British Workman.*

TWO GOLDEN RULES.*

"I MIGHT add many things concerning my family," says that excellent man, Thomas Scott, "in respect of which God has specially favoured me, so that many have wished me to say what methods I took which were crowned with such success; there is one particular which appears to have been the grand secret. I have always sought for them IN THE FIRST PLACE the kingdom of God, and His righteousness."

I appeal fearlessly to any Christian Parent, and say, "Have you done this, and been disappointed?" and I hear, echoed from family to family, through the length and breadth of those lands where the gospel shines, "Never, never, never!" Suffer a few words to you who are parents. Are you honest as regards your children? Do you honestly wish them to be trained up to serve God? You wish them eventually to go to heaven, of course; but do you wish them now to be living as God's children? Alas, alas! how many professedly Christian parents would have their children partly religious, and partly worldly; not "too religious," and not "altogether worldly," a sort of ideal medium, which has no Scripture for its foundation, and no heaven for its goal. Can God honour a divided purpose and a crooked action? If, Balaam-like, our hearts go one way and our lips another, let us beware, lest we be found haply fighting against God, and an enemy in the camp. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," but "if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Be in earnest, Christian parents! let your children be thoroughly convinced that you are training them with reference to God and eternity, that you are not commending religion one day, and dallying with the world the next. Consistency is the secret of influence. Children are very quick discriminators, they soon make up in their little minds what is the real standard of a parent's actions, and they honour that parent according to his or her consistency. Let your *Golden Rule* be that of Thomas Scott, to seek for your beloved children IN THE FIRST PLACE, the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Bring it to bear on everything, carry it into the details of daily life, in the selection of attendants and governors, in the formation of habits, in the choice of amusements, in the culti-

* "Sunbeams for Mothers." London: WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, and HUNT, 24, Paternoster Row.

vation of talents, in the making of friends; in everything let this blessed rule be as the gold dust in the far off east, which impregnates the very soil, sparkles in the crystal stream, is mixed with the road dust of mother earth, forcing from the delighted digger the exclamation, "Why gold is found whichever way I turn!" God loves and honours uprightness of principle and action, but "the hypocrite is an abomination to Him." When a single, prayerful, God-honouring line of conduct is steadily pursued with our children, I am more and more persuaded a rich and permanent blessing will rest upon them.

Let your second Golden Rule be this—*Win the thorough confidence of your children.* Encourage them to tell you *everything*, all their little cares and sorrows; ENTER INTO THEIR FEELINGS, from the breaking of a favourite doll, to their settlement in life; let them, if possible, have no interest, whether of joy or sorrow, apart from you; let your mother's heart be a large, deep, responsive one for your children's confidence. Think of the minuteness and individuality of your heavenly Father's love; strive after conformity to this love as regards your children. This is pre-eminently a day of religious activity, and of religious excitement.

The valuable energies of the Christian mother are now-a-days well-nigh drained, by working the machinery of religion. Committees, Ragged-School Associations, Scripture Readings, Religious Gatherings, etc., etc., (all admirable in their way), occupy the freshness of their day's strength; they have little time for the luxury of a quiet hour or two in the nursery, when identifying their interests with their little ones, and playing with them, they would have quiet opportunity of watching and checking the waywardness of one, and the selfishness of another, and the *ennui* of a third, who would oftentimes be diverted from mischief by a mother wisely and lovingly turning his attention into another channel; much less can she make time amidst the hurry and bustle of religious life to direct the schoolroom occupations, to mark the causes and effects that are daily working there, and moulding the youthful character for good, or for evil. It is a little community where the mother should be the presiding spirit. A few short years, and the schoolroom will be exchanged for the world, and its present inmates will go forth to take their parts, as their mothers have done before them, in its struggles and its joys, bearing with them the impress of their schoolroom days!

—days when they have perhaps longed in vain for opportunity to pour into their busy mother's heart their little cares, and sorrows, and heart-burnings, and disappointed struggles and fears, and hopes for the future. Then comes the hour when we shall see our children in manhood's prime, or womanhood's estate. Have we gained their confidence? Will they come to us for counsel in the realities of life? Will they confide their deepest heart's interest to us? Will they, above all, tell us of their struggles, of their prayers, of their conflicts, yea, and of their sins, and beg us to strengthen them, and pray with them, and watch over them? If so, happy are we! If not, let us search and try our ways, as in God's sight. "I really scarcely ever see my children," was the remark of a truly, excellent, busy mother, "I have so many religious objects to look to in London, and then I have Scripture readings that I attend, and so large a circle of religious valued friends, that I seldom have a leisure evening." Ah, Christian mother! remember, while you are busy carrying on religious and philanthropic objects, the world's incipient machinery for good or for evil is being brought into play hour by hour (though unheeded by your maternal eye) in your nursery, and in your school-room. The future ministers, statesmen, soldiers, and sailors, are there, as also the future wives and mothers of England, each learning (whether you will or no) the part they are to play in life, each being moulded for time, and for eternity—for God or for the world. Let your maternal love then be shown by your presiding presence, watchfulness, and influence over your children. "Take this child, and nurse it for me," is a message to each mother as she folds her new-born treasure to her heart.

With these two grand, Golden Rules then would we close:

Seek for your children *in the first place the kingdom of God, and His righteousness.*

Win the full and entire confidence of your children.

Fear not results. Doubt not but that your happy experience will prove the full blessedness of a full answer to that prayer, "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace."—Psalm cxliv.

"It is delightful to let God see that you can trust and love him, when you cannot understand him."

THE BEGINNINGS OF EVIL.

It comes in a white devil, but it soon darkens into a black one. It arrives like a fairy through a crack in the door or a chink in the wall; but it soon expands into a giant, which crushes into a corner all the better inmates, and which the whole strength of the household is unable to expel. It begins a tiny stream, which it is almost amusing to observe as it rills over the embankment, and runs among the grass; but already the colossal hydra is mining the substructions, and, with a mighty heave, is ready to overthrow the rampart, and let the roaring ruin enter.

Sometimes it is a slow and insidious process. Like the little stream of brine which soon converts into a putrid marsh the green pasture or the smiling garden, some evil habits come with little observation, but they soon turn "fat land to barrenness." You change a pious friend for a worldly acquaintance. You give up a strict or a fervent religious society for one more lukewarm or fashionable. You quit the safe and sober path of industry and frugality for the faster route of a doubtful calling or a speculative adventure. In the absorption of business or the fascination of a favourite amusement, you give up some of your good old habits—your reading of good books, your frequenting of prayer-meetings, your visiting of the poor, your instructing of the young. And although the change is slow and silent, and does not startle your neighbour or yourself, it is none the less real. It is gradually secularising your spirit—deadening it to God and things divine; and, just as in a garden when it changes into brackish quag, the fairest and sweetest flowers are the first to perish, whilst a few of the coarser and more common plants may linger to the last; although thrift and honesty, and some of the every-day virtues may still survive, tenderness of conscience and brotherly kindness, prayerfulness and love to God, and all the beauties of an unworldly holiness, die away, and there is danger lest, drowned in cares of this life, and swamped with earthly-mindedness, your soul subside into the state described by the prophet, "The miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof, shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt."

But there is another way of it. The breach may be the prelude to a sudden inburst—the pioneer of an awful and overwhelming inundation. As we said, character is a reprisal from the surrounding

ungodliness. It is that measure of moral worth and Christian consistency which God enables any one to achieve in the midst of this present evil world. But so far as it is human, it is weak; and in as far as it is goodness in the midst of evil, it is beset with peril. Around it rages a troubled sea that cannot rest; and, with the corroding industry of a current, "the course of this world" keeps burrowing and sapping it; whilst in moments of fierce temptation, the prince of the power of the air heaps all his storms on the stressed and straining bulwark. And just as in lands where clay ramparts exclude the main, a leak may be disregarded for months; but at length there comes a fearful hurricane, and, as it piles the waters on the feeble dyke, the little runnel grows into a foaming spout, and the spout expands into the molton mud and tearing fury of a broad cascade; and with a groan the bulwark bursts, and the exulting ocean tumbles in: as amongst ships torn from their anchorage and tossing through the trees, you see the spinning-wheel and the empty cradle floated past, and the hoary grandsire and the helpless babe alike swept off on the gurgling billows, you perceive how criminal is negligence—you pronounce a curse on carelessness.

Reader, find out your sin, or be sure your sin will find out you. Ascertain the weak point in your character, and whatever it be—a soft and consenting humour, a covetous or gain-grasping propensity—a truth-concealing or truth-distorting cowardice—a boastful or vain-glorious spirit—sloth, selfishness, the indulgence of base appetite, be sure that, uncured and unconquered, that sin will be your ruin. At this moment you may fancy you may have it under your control; but it will not be long till it convince you that it, and not you, are the master. And before, tied and bound with its chain, you are carried captive by Satan at his pleasure, implore of God, for the dear Saviour's sake, to pardon all its grievous guilt, and beg the aids of his Spirit—all holy and almighty—to enable you to overcome it. Nor, at first, would it be misdirected industry, though you concentrated all your energies on this one endangered point—though you made it the object of your all but exclusive watchfulness, the subject of your most importunate prayers. This particular sin is your weak point; and when storms of temptation come, when any unwonted urgency is brought to bear, it is here that too likely your character will break down and sweep away your prospects for either world.

At the same time see to the foundations. In the lands in question it sometimes happens that the dyke is green, and all that meets the eye looks firm and solid ; but underneath low-water level, the worms have bored the piles, the rush of the current has washed away the supporting materials ; and whilst the owner and his neighbours congratulate themselves on the fresh turf and the fine facings of the masonry, to every one's amazement the mole gives way and crumbles down into the deep. So reputations, which have stood for many years, sometimes suddenly and mysteriously succumb. Addicted to no bad habit, as far as is known to other people—of good report among them that are without—of fair standing in the church itself—all of a sudden the rumour flies, "The dyke is broken!" "Such a one has denied the faith, or done a deed which, when you hear it, will make your ears to tingle."

Now, as such an explosion is not an accident, as it seldom happens that a reputation gives way in which a hollowing process has not been advancing for some time before, it becomes him who standeth to take heed lest he fall. Let us see to it that the foundations are secure—that the substructions are sound. Our creed was genuine once : let us see to it that we are sincere and as fully persuaded now as when we first believed. God's eye was once around our path wherever we might go : let us take care lest we forget his presence now : "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord : " "Let him that nameth the name of Jesus depart from all iniquity," were once main piers in the foundation : let us see to it that now, when we are so much nearer the great white throne, the revelations of God's righteous judgment are not losing their solemnity. Friendship with Christ, and purity of heart and conduct, once were synonymes : let us see to it, lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty—a tree of God's garden—a truth of God's word—be not made a plea for transgression—a pretext for presumption, and because grace has abounded we take courage to sin. Prayer and its implied dependence on God were once as essential to our security as its anchor to the ship—as is its buttress to the ocean bulwark ; let us see to it that the very answers to prayer be not perverted into an occasion of carnal confidence, and because we have been kept so long, we fancy that henceforward we can keep ourselves. Such presumption nothing can survive. Worm-eaten by unbelief, the supporting pillars will give way, and caved out by the corroding current of

worldly-mindedness, the foundations will be swept to sea; and as, undermined and hollowed, the floods come and beat upon that house, it will fall, and great will be the fall thereof.

TRUE POLITENESS.

TRUE politeness comes from the heart, and this being good, the rest will soon follow. But, as Chesterfield says, "Good-sense and good-nature suggest civility in general; but in good breeding there are a thousand little delicacies, which are established only by custom." That which militates most against good breeding is an indifference to, or want of consideration for the feelings of others; and what does this amount to but a bad heart? A courtier may hate me with civility, and a brigand rob me politely. Is there not some good in the heart of both these men? Have they not a great consideration for my feelings? They cannot, they would tell me, help what they do; I stand in this one's way, and he must, and does hate me; I have a purse, and the other is a robber, he must, and will take it; but both of them, compelled to treat me so ill, do it with a grace that removes half the annoyance of it. The courtier conceals his hatred, and what therefore do I care for it? I do not even know of its existence, and a passion which we never discover cannot affect us. Then, too, if the highway-man politely and delicately "invites" me to give up those few paltry bank-notes, assuring me it is his "profession," that he laments the necessity, and that if I show no fight, no violence will be used, I have at least the comfort of being saved from a fright, of being allowed free speech, of being given the option to fight or yield, so that when I come to think how much an agreeable manner may do to console and conciliate, I don't know whether I could accuse my worst enemy of a want of heart, if he behaved like a gentleman to me. However, I am convinced that if a man had not a good only, but a perfect heart, if all his attention were directed to the comfort of others, and he was willing perpetually to make the sacrifice necessary to insure it, he would need little or no instruction in manners more than a little experience. He would soon discover how this act or that gave offence or caused embarrassment to his neighbour; and while he saw nothing wrong in it himself, would, for his neighbour's sake, avoid it for the future —

The Habits of Good Society.

The Family Preacher.

THE YOUNG RULER.

A Sermon

PREACHED IN THE WESLEYAN CHAPEL, LIVERPOOL ROAD, ISLINGTON, BY THE

REV. THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.,

ON TUESDAY MORNING, APRIL 9TH, 1861.

On behalf of the Islington Reformatory and Ragged School.

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions."—Mark x. 21, 22.

It is not raw recruits and beardless boys that hold the front of battle. These are not the stormers they throw into the fiery breach. On the contrary, where the bullets fly the thickest, and the carnage is the fiercest, the ground is held by veterans, men inured to war, the flash of steel, and the roar of cannon; on whose grim faces calm determination sits, with scars and medals on their breasts. The post of danger is assigned to veterans. Heavy burdens are laid on the backs, not of boys, but of grown men. It were little else than murder to bid a youth, that had just left his mother's side, nor ever had his foot before on a deck, climb the shrouds and reef the topsails in a storm, when the mast bends to the breaking, and the ship reels in the trough of the sea. That were not common sense; and what man who loved his son, and had either sense or consideration, would put a tender youth to so terrible a trial? It is said here, "Jesus, beholding, loved him;" and if he loved this young ruler, why did he put him to a trial that, I venture to say, would test the faith, not of a young Christian, but of the oldest and most matured Christian within this house? Why did he, so to speak, send this boy to the very front of battle, the thickest of the fight? Doing so, I confess that, for myself, I am not much astonished at the result. At first sight, at least, I wonder less at this youth shrinking back, than I wonder at our Lord bidding him go forward. Let the best Christian in this house put himself for a moment in this youth's circumstances. Think how you would feel

JULY.

now, were you just called upon to-day in this house to give up all the earnings of a lifetime, to part with some ancestral property, the dear old house, and the old trees, and the scenes of your boyhood, your possession, your fortune, your estate, your rank, to leave all, to become a beggar and follow the fortunes of a man so poor himself that he had not often where to lay his head. I doubt that would be a burden under which the oldest Christian would stagger. I suspect that would try the faith of the best man in this house. And if any of you are disposed to look with scorn rather than sympathy on this poor young man, I am not of your number; and I would remind you, think how you would have done, and how erect you would have stood, and how nobly you would have acted—let me remind you of these words, "Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast as he that putteth it off." The question, then, brethren, recurs, why did our Lord put this youth to such a trial? Was it done to repel him? No; it was done to draw him. It was not done to drive him away, but it was done to draw him near to Christ. It was not done to quench the smoking flax, but to blow it, as it were, by what seemed an adverse wind, into a burning flame. It was kindly done; it was discreetly done; it was mercifully done. By this step our Lord intended to make that man know what he was, and make him acquainted with this, that he was not what he seemed to be to others, ay, and seemed to be to his ownself. This test was applied to convince him practically of what it was impossible, perhaps, to convince him of theoretically, that, in the words to which I now direct you, "one thing he lacked," and that sad to say, the one thing needful.

And now, let us return to these words; and let me, in the first place, turn your attention, by one or two familiar examples, to what you may not be otherwise sufficiently impressed with—the importance of one thing. Many people may say, "It is well to have everything but one thing. If I be everything but one thing, I may be very thankful and very contented"—forgetting this, that the absence of one thing may vitiate the presence of everything else. Look at a watch wanting the mainspring. I find every other spring in the watch beside the mainspring; but, wanting a mainspring, with all its jewels, pinions, and axles, the finest watch that London ever made is no better than a stone. And the sun-dial without its gnomon, its iron finger that throws its shadow upon the hours, and that is but one thing, a bit of iron—the sun-dial without that is of no more use at broad mid-day than in black midnight. Yet those are but single things. A ship, for instance, may be built of the stoutest oak, and she may be officered by the most accomplished men, and she may have on her deck the most able-bodied crew; but stoutest oak, accomplished officers, able seamen—I do not sail in her if she wants that needle that looks more like a child's toy than anything else, that one thing, that little thing, that trembling thing, on which the life of all turns, without which the ship is a great coffin, and the sea is a deep grave. Just so it is with genuine faith and piety wanting; the best deed

you ever did, the biggest sacrifice you ever made—though you were to give not one, nor a hundred, nor a thousand, but ten thousand pounds to the collection this day, it would be all null and void in the sight of God.

To show you again, by a still more familiar example, how valueless everything may become without one thing, and what value piety will give to all things else—making two mites weigh more than two millions, and a cup of water to be worth more than a cup of gold—let me take an example from arithmetic. You put down a line of cyphers. Well, being nothing they amount to nothing. You cover sheet after sheet with these—sheet after sheet. You cover the earth with them; you cover the heavens with them—still they are nothing. Well, I take the lowest number of the ten; I take the lowest number in the digits, and I put it at the head of these long lines of cyphers, and magic never wrought such a change! Nothing before, by this one thing, do you see, by this one little thing, they rise to thousands, millions, tens of millions; and whether they represent pounds, or whether they represent pearls, by this one thing, the stroke of a pen, how great is the sum of them. And now, brethren, just such is the virtue and power that reside in true piety. It may be the lowest piety—it may be the love of a smoking flax, it may be the confidence of a bruised reed, it may be the faith of a mustard seed, it may be the trust of him who went staggering on, just able to cry, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief;" but if it is there, if it is there, oh, what value it gives to a man's life, and what a prospect it gives to a man's eternity! That one thing there, all is right; and that one thing not there all is wrong; so that, however amiable you be, however moral you be, however seemingly religious you be, let me tell you now, that, if you lack the true piety and have not the faith I have spoken of, my brother, you have still to be saved. In lacking that, you lack the one thing needful.

Now, having "a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and that leads us often to say, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace to be found, I would employ what remains of our time now, in setting before you certain cautions. And the first I would speak to you about is this, (as is proved by the case of this young ruler,) that we may be very amiable without true religion. We may have a kind temper, and yet lack the one thing needful. It is a sad thing to see how, in some people, grace is associated with a sour temper, a sullen temper, narrow-mindedness, uncharitableness, bigotry, and a severe character of mind. This should not be so, brethren. It is a very monstrous conjunction, it is a bad marriage, it is a most unsuitable alliance to see a good man sour. To be sour is not to be sanctified; and it always reminds me of the wise man's figure of a jewel in a swine's snout. There is nothing I can describe it so well by as that. Grace is the jewel, and that is the temper that it is put into.* If the enmity of the world to God and His image is such that a Christian is not loved, be it so,—let the Christian be loving and let him be lovely. What a beautiful example of that have we in our Lord himself! In whose eye did He ever

start a tear? In whose pillow did he ever plant a thorn? His look bred hope in the bosom of despair, and won the guiltiest woman to his feet. The voice that controlled the elements of nature won the confidence of little children; and while He was a man among men, He was as a child among children. He had tears for all that wept: He had ears for all that begged; He had a hand for all that needed; He had forgiveness for all that sinned; He had paradise for a dying thief; He had prayers for His bloody murderers; He had pity for His pitiless enemies, and such sympathy for all who suffered, that Mary never doubted, but, when He came back after Lazarus' death, she passionately said, "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Well did a woman one day, as she hung on His lips, and raised her eye to that face where human mildness blended with divine majesty, exclaim, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee and the paps that Thou hast sucked." So was it with our Lord, brethren. You say, "that is a beautiful picture, but what is the picture hung up for?" For you to admire? No, but to sit down and copy, by attention to such counsels as these; and if you attend to them, we shall not want money this day. "Be courteous, be merciful, be kindly and affectionate one towards another, forgiving and forbearing one towards another. Let no wrath nor malice nor evil speaking proceed out of your mouth; let not the sun go down upon your anger." "Love one another as I have loved you." Beloved, "he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God;" and because Christians do not attend to these instructions and practical lessons of Christianity, but are learned in doctrine and sound, as they call it, in the faith, how do they mar the influence of grace? I do not say they do not shine, but they shine as I have seen a lamp, when the light struggled dimly through its smoked and soiled glass. Shine, by all means shine, but remember that little word in our Lord's sermon, where he says, "So shine,"—shine so brightly, shine so beautifully, shine with such smokeless love, shine with such transparent kindness—"That others seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Now, brethren, if I wanted a very perfect contrast, even in a Christian man, to our Saviour, if I wanted to see an illustrious illustration of what I have said—how sad it is to see grace dwelling in an unkindly temper—I have an example in Jonah. Just look at that sullen gloomy man. He had been a great sinner: no man ever stood more in need of God's mercy than he; but see how he sat there calmly contemplating the destruction of a city that had six thousand infants in it, who did not know their right hand from their left. That a Christian? Then see how he frets and fumes because Nineveh is not destroyed, and his character of a prophet may come in question. What a revolting picture of a selfish man is that? So much so that some doubt Jonah's piety altogether. I do not doubt it: but I say Jonah is an illustration of a common saying some have, that grace will live where neither you nor I could live; and it seems to me that grace living in Jonah, is a greater miracle than Jonah living in the whale's belly; and it appears to me, moreover, that when Jonah was delivered from that abominable temper, it was a greater deliverance than when the monster of the deep cleft its way through the sea, and vomited the man forth, safe upon dry land. Now, brethren, let no man or woman in this house live with such a temper, let no man or woman in this house be content with such a temper. Let me tell you that no Christian will die with it. No, the green fruit is acid; but it sweetens, and it ripens, and it mellows to its fall. Brethren, may it be so with you.

Then, brethren, you have seen, in the case of Jonah—I am sorry to say I have no doubt you will see in the case of some of your friends and acquaintances—that grace may live with a very unhappy temper and an unamiable

disposition ; but what I want to observe is this, that while grace may live where there is no little of what I call the heathen graces—while Christian graces may live where there is no little of what I call common graces—there may be a great deal of common graces without any Christian grace at all, just as we see in Nature the moor with its golden gorge, the mountain robed in autumnal purple, the bank, by the water-side, gemmed with modest primroses, these uncultivated wilds as well as gardens of many a lovely flower. And so it is with unsanctified natures. There are many sweet children, many kind parents, many loving sisters, many true brothers, many kind acquaintances and friends as staunch as steel, of whom we cannot say, however much we wish it, that they have the grace of God. Let none of us, therefore, mistake—I say let none of us mistake—the amiable and beautiful parts of character for divine graces. Why, where could you find a finer specimen of that, than in the man before us? That young man—alas! I hope he was saved, but I do not know it—who can but love him, that young man—with his back to Christ, back to the world, back to his possessions, and Christ's kind eye following him in love! What a warning, what a lesson to the most lovely and gentle, and amiable and kind, and benevolent persons within these walls to-day! It is not enough to be amiable, it is not enough to be loving, it is not enough, in a sense, to be lovely; the Word of God standeth for ever, and it is this, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Let me now turn your attention, in the next place, to another thought—this, namely, that we may not only be very amiable without true and saving grace, but we may be morally correct without true religion or saving faith. This is a step further. Were you ever in a court of law? Did you ever see a man tried? There seems a wide difference to you and I between a judge on the bench, robes of office on his back, and on his mien and countenance deep thought and dignity—a great difference between yon poor, pale, miserable, trembling wretch that hangs his head in shame and sorrow. To the eye of God there is a very short step between the best and worst—very little, if any difference sometimes at all, between the two; and if you know their history, very little difference in your eye too. That man on the bench had a kind mother; he had a pious father; he had a good name to sustain, got a good education, and every advantage. That poor wretch at the bar is a stranger to all that, and it is for those that have to go to that bar, unless the people in this church will bar their way to it, that I stand here to plead this day. Well, I say he is a stranger to all that. The child of misfortune, born of the lowest parentage, he was never taught anything at all good; but to lie, and cheat, and steal. He began the battle with devils in his very cradle, with serpents: and it is all very well for the heathen to have a fable about Hercules strangling the serpent in his cradle; that is a heathen fable, not a human fact. Well, that man on the bench never knew what it was to want a meal; the boy at the bar has gone to bed often cold and hungry. It is very easy for some people to be honest—very easy for you to be honest. I give you no credit for your honesty. It is as easy for some people to be honest as it is difficult for others. And I would just remind any in this house, who may be ready to say to some poor guilty thing in the streets, "Stand aside, do not touch me; I am holier than thou;" or, who are ready to plume themselves upon their honesty, and decency, and morality, saying, "We have not sinned as others;" my brother and my sister, let me remind you, you have not been tried as others; that is the truth, and the truth is that that makes many of the differences that you find in this world—the difference between her there who is stamped with infamy, and he who has got the key of a prison turned on him, and your decent, well-clothed, correct,

pure self. It is just the difference between a green branch and the white ashes beneath the grate—the branch is fanned by the winds of heaven, the other has been thrown into the burning fire. It is the difference between being tried and not tried, tempted and not tempted, although I know that where the grace of God is, tempt a man as ye may, he will stand. A greater sight than Moses saw when he said, "I will turn aside and see this great sight," and he saw a bush with all its green leaves and white blossoms red in flames, burning, yet not consumed.

I think, brethren, few would talk thus, if you would come to look at what I have said. I can easily explain this young man's case. Born to fortune—the child, as they say, of fortune—born to a good estate, born to maintain a responsible rank in society, well trained and well taught, with kind, indulgent parents, I can easily understand how he gave this outward observance to the law. I believe he spoke the truth. I have no doubt he was thoroughly honest. I believe no man could have laid a finger on the public crime that youth ever committed. I can account for all that without a particle of the grace of God in this man. With his purse full of money, what temptation had he to steal? What temptation have you? You are honest. Have you ever been tempted? Then, born with a kind heart, he had none of those fiery passions that, like a volcano, break out into deeds of violence, and crime, and murder. Then, holding a responsible office, something like that of a minister, he was a ruler, and no wonder that he was not grasping, as many are; he had a character to maintain in the world. And then, that man of loving parents, who had been loving and indulging him, I do not wonder, that if they were alive, he loved them, and, if they were dead, he should cherish his father's and mother's memory—who does not?—and adorn their tomb: and I can account for this, that he comes to Christ saying "Master, all these have I observed from my youth," without a particle of the love of Christ in this man's heart. Had he known, what he did not know, the spiritual nature of the law, that the law is a searcher of the thoughts and intents of the heart—that there may be adultery in a look, theft in a desire, murder in an angry passion—had he known that, he had not gone to Christ to say, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth;" but, "Alas, my Master, alas! all these have I broken from my youth. Save me, I perish!" He did not know that. He never dreamt of it: and hence the answer he gave our Lord. And so, brethren, look at this man's end. He had affections, was so kind and tender, that Jesus loved him. He was a man of the highest *morale*; nobody could challenge him. No man could say of adultery, or murder, or theft, or falsehood—"thou art the man." Well, I say, if this man was not saved, if this man was not in a safe and sound condition, what cause has every man and woman in this house to look to the foundations upon which they stand! Why, brethren, if this case be true, and the rest of Scripture be true, you may be more amiable than Jonah, your life may be purer than David's, you may have been more honest than the man whom, with dying hands, Christ opened the door of heaven to, you may be able to say with the prodigal's elder brother, "Lo, these many years have I served thee, and not transgressed thy commandments:" all that may be true, and yet you may want that one thing, without which all that goes for nothing. Ah! let us pray to God, "Search me and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me: and lead me in the way everlasting."

Let me, now, in closing, set before you another point, and that is, brethren, that we not only may be amiable, like this young man, without true religion, but that we may feel some interest about religion, and yet not be truly religious. That is an extraordinary thing, and that is a warning thing. There may be every appearance of religion—great amiability, unchallenge-

able morality, considerable anxiety about our souls and what is good, and it may be all the paint and wrappings of a mummy-case, but open it, and there is nothing but dust and death within. What need have we, then, to try ourselves by these tests? The fact is, the further I advance the road gets the darker; the thing looks more serious and more alarming. Why, here is a man so amiable that Christ loved him, and everybody loved him, and yet he is not saved; he is without saving grace. Here is a man of the highest *morale*; I venture to say that there is not a more moral man in this house; yet he is without saving grace. Here is a man that repairs to the very Fountain-head of the waters of life; comes to Christ to talk about his soul, which many never did about theirs; yet he is without saving grace, lost, for ever lost, unless he becomes a changed man, of which we have no record in Bible history. I look at this, brethren, as one of the most alarming cases in all the Bible. How should it make the best of us look to our foundation, and see what we are building on! And is not there many a man and woman in this house it should alarm? Why, my dear friends, what should come of us when we come short of graces possessed by a man who himself came short of eternal life? If that man was not saved, how are we to be saved? If that ship did not go into port, how are we to be saved from wrecking? If that was done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If a man of unchallengeable morality—if a man of the most amiable temper—if a man anxious about religion was not saved, I want to know what is to become of those who are not moral? I want to know what is to become of those that are not amiable? I want to know what is to become of a man who worships yon world, and lives for its mean, and wretched, and passing objects? “Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall enter the kingdom of heaven.” Brethren look at these things for one moment. I am very much mistaken—I would judge charitably of all men, as I would that men should judge of me, but I am very much mistaken if this man did not give more evidence of grace than some of us ever did. Look at his anxiety; he came running—a man that is running is an earnest man—he came running to Jesus. Look at his courage: he did not come like Nicodemus, another ruler, stealing under the cloud of night; he came in open day, boldly before the eyes of all men, under the sun of heaven. Look at his humility; born of a noble and very wealthy family, a man of high position, a man of high standing, a man of high rank, a man of immense wealth, he falls on his knees before a man that walked the world a beggar, who had not a couch to lie on, and often did not know where he was to have his bread. Look at his reverence. Other men call Jesus a glutton and a winebibber. This man called other men Rabbis; but for the maligned of the Pharisees and the carpenter’s son he reserved the highest title above them all. He said to the son of the carpenter, not “Master” but it was “*Good Master*, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Once more, look at what was the object at which he grasped. And what are you grasping at? What do you rise for in the morning? What do you sit down for at night? What do you think about in these streets? What comes in at the door and fills your mind at the House of God? What was that man grasping at? He had money, he had amiability; he had rank; he had everything that the human heart could desire; he had wealth beyond his want; he was a ruler; he was in high esteem; he had popular favour; all men bowed to him in the street; but all that cannot fill up the emptiness of the soul. He grasped at a better world. He missed it. I hope he got it afterwards; but, like a drowning man, he grasped at it. He sought a house eternal in the heavens; he sought honours that come from God only;

he sought life that should never die; he sought waters that should never fail; and so he sought heaven—sought it in haste; he ran to the crowd, elbowed his way in, pushed them aside, and fell at Jesus' feet and cried, "Good Master! Good Master! Oh! what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Well might the disciples say, when they saw that man turn away, and our Lord, as he followed him with pitiful eye say, "It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God; it is easier for a camel to enter a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God:"—well might the disciples, astonished, say, "Who then can be saved?" And I think some of you may have been saying, as I went on, "If that man so amiable, so moral, so apparently anxious about salvation is not saved, who, then, can be saved? If that ship is wrecked, what hope is there for me?" I am here to answer that question. I stand here to face the question, and in one word to answer it. Do you say, "Who then, can be saved?" I say you can be saved; and I say all in those galleries can be saved; I say all in this house can be saved. When? To-morrow? Now; before you leave your seat; before you pass out of that door. Who can be saved? I say all can be saved, and all may be saved, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This man went away sorrowful; he might have gone away joyful. He went away grieved; he might have gone away glad. And, brethren, on your decision now it turns in which state of mind you will go; glad or grieved: sorrowful or joyful. A sorrowful or joyful leaving; a sorrowful or joyful life; a sorrowful or joyful death; a sorrowful or joyful eternity is now in your offer. The one thing is—Faith to follow Christ—to believe in him. Fall at his feet, and you will rise not to go away—not to turn your back on him. No; but you will rise to say, "Jesus, lead on! Crossbearer, go on; I follow. Farewell father, mother, sister, houses, lands, wife, children, honour, fame. Lead on, my Lord; what Thou commandest I will do; what Thou forbiddest I will abstain from. Lead on; I follow. Where Thou goest I go; where Thou dwellest I dwell. Thy people shall be my people, and Thy God shall be my God." God bless that word, for his name's sake. Amen!

Sketches and Essays.

HOW TO KILL AN ENEMY.

"CHILDREN," said a kind father to his little family, as he took a seat by the fireside, and gathered them round him for a pleasant talk, "which is the best way to kill an enemy?"

"Why, shoot him, to be sure," said one.

"No, stab him," said a second.

"No, starve him," said a third.

"But, I think," said their father, "I can show you a better way than this. An enemy may be killed without taking from him his life, or shedding a single drop of his blood. Let me tell you a story, to show how it may be done.

"There was a farmer once, who was a very cross, surly, disagreeable man. Everybody in the neighbourhood knew him, and everybody disliked him. He was sure to make the most of whatever went wrong about him, and the poor offender always met with severe punishment. There was not a boy in all the neighbourhood who didn't feel uncomfortable as he passed his gate; and the poor dog that barked at his geese, or the neighbour's rooster that crowed on his wall, was speedily visited either with the lash of his whip, or the shot from his gun. The very cat knew his footsteps, and slunk away from him in terror. He was a complete pest, as much so to himself as to those about him. Every day brought him some fresh trouble, and found him in continual 'hot water;' indeed, his very life was made up of broils.

"After a time, good farmer Green came to live near him, and, as you may suppose, he was soon told the character of his not over-pleasant neighbour.

"'Well,' says he, 'if he shows off on me, I'll very soon kill him!'

"This remark of farmer Green's soon got afloat, and all sorts of things were said about it. He seemed the very last man to kill any one, for his looks, and words, and actions all told of a loving heart which throbbed in his bosom, and directed his life. Nobody

The Mother's Magazine, August. 1861.

could think for a moment of his becoming a murderer. Mr. Green's intention at length came to the ears of the ill-natured farmer, and you may be sure he was not at all pleased about it. Everything he could do to tease, annoy, and even injure Mr. Green, was done; but, somehow or other, the man who was to kill this ugly-tempered farmer, took it all in good part, and spoke as calmly, and looked as kindly as ever.

"One day, Mrs. Green sent to the wife of our surly friend a basket of nice plums; but her husband wouldn't let her have them. He told the person who brought them, very gruffly, that 'it was only done to get some of his pears in return, and he wasn't going to give any of them away.'

"At another time, Mr. Green's team of oxen stuck fast in a bog, and when he asked his neighbour for a little help, he told him, in a very rough way, that he had enough to do to mind his own business, and refused to help him.

"'Never mind,' said Green to some one standing by, 'I'll kill him very soon, see if I don't.'

"Soon after this, the team of the ill-natured man was in the same plight that his neighbour's had been in. Mr. Green saw it. He ran for his oxen and chains, and set off to the bog. He spoke kindly, offered his help, and began to render it; but what did he receive in reply? Why a fierce look and an angry word,—'I don't want your help! take your oxen away.'

"'No,' said the other, 'I must help you, for the night is coming on, and what is bad enough by day is ten times worse in the dark.' Away pulled the oxen and the men, and soon all was set right again.

"A strange feeling did that rough, cross man carry home with him that evening—something which he had never felt before. And a strange look did his wife give him as he said, 'Peg, farmer Green has killed me! He said he would, and he has done it.'

"Yes, the 'enemy' was 'killed' without the loss of a single life, or one drop of blood. He went in the morning to confess his ingratitude to his kind neighbour, and to ask his forgiveness; and the very man, who had been noted for nothing but his wickedness, became the friend of all."

There is the greatest difference in the world between conquering by power and conquering by kindness. The former is like building

a dam across a stream of water. It may stop its flow for a little while, but presently the dam may give way, and then the stream will rush on with more force and fury than ever. Conquering by kindness is like drying up the springs which feed the stream. Conquering by power is like keeping a lion from doing harm, by chaining him; conquering by kindness keeps the lion from doing harm, by changing his nature, and turning him into a lamb.

THANK YOU.

"MOTHER," said a little girl, "I gave a poor beggar child a drink of water and a slice of bread, and she said 'Thank you' to me so beautifully, and it made me so glad, I shall never forget it."

Now, children can do a great many things worth a 'thank you.' Kind offices are everywhere and at all times needed; for there are always sick ones, sorrowful ones, poor ones, besides dear ones, to make happy by kindness; and it goes further towards making home happy than almost anything else. Kind offices also are within everybody's reach, like air and sunshine; and if anybody feels fretful, or discontented, or repining, or unthankful, and wants a medicine to cure it, I would say, do a 'thank you's' worth of kind offices every hour you live, and you will be cured. It is a wonderful sweetener of life. Try it.

THE EYE THAT MOCKETH ITS FATHER.

THERE is a warning to disobedient children in the incident related below. At the time of a parent's commands the rule seems harsh, the authority severe. How often has the rebellious child in his heart murmured something like this:—"I think my father is cruel. When he was a boy he would not have liked to have had such commands laid on him. He might let us have our way this once." Thus children oftentimes secretly believe their parents to be tyrants. It is no harm to resist cruel commands. Hence, they disobey the most solemn words a mother or father can adopt.

A minister once had a lovely little son—he was his only son. On a beautiful bright Sabbath morning in June, the cherries were ripe, and the green leaves which were around them made them appear so red and nice. The father was about to leave for church, and feared that his boy, who was a disobedient child, would break the Lord's

day, and peril his life to get some cherries. But before he started he called William to him, and said, "My son, do you know what day this is?" "The Sabbath day." "Can you wait until to-morrow for the cherries which are ripe?" Willie answered, "Yes." "My son, remember this is God's day. Don't go near the tree. Don't forget your father's command.

After he saw his father had disappeared over the hill, and his nurse engaged in another part of the house, he took his stand at the window to gaze at the beautiful bright red fruit. It was not the first time that boys had been tempted to covet and steal. "Stolen waters are sweet"—and only sweet at times, because forbidden.

After Willie had filled his eye and heart with the cherries, he secretly stole out of the house, and climbed up the tree. He was busily plucking the fruit, when the door opening, alarmed him. He missed his hold, and fell some twelve feet to the earth. The servant hastened to carry him into the house. But his neck was broken, and there lay the young Sabbath-breaker, dead. He had died in the very act of disobeying his parents. His father and mother returned. Their little Willie was dead. Had you, my little reader, been there, you would have heard them lament thus—"My son! my son! would to God we had died for you! My son! my son!"

But the Rev. Mr. Buyers tells of a case where the little text was exactly fulfilled in India. Could we know the history of the man, we would, doubtless, find that he, too, had mocked at his father, and scorned to obey his mother.

A soldier left a military station on the Ganges to indulge his wicked desire for strong drink. This was an act of disobedience to his commander. He found some araky in a native village, and after taking too much, he strolled from the path into a field, and there falling down, went to sleep. The vultures seeing him lying thus, supposed he was dead. Wheeling around, they came down, and with instant power and skill, they picked out both of his eyes. Starting up, writhing with pain, he was instantly cured of his drunkenness. He screamed for help, and the strolling natives came to the miserable creature, and led him home to the barracks, a solemn warning to his associates.

Let the reader of these lines never forget God's command—Children, obey your parents. He has other ways of punishing the wicked beside the ravens of the valley and the young eagles of the mountains.

HUMAN SACRIFICE.

2 Kings vi. 24—29.

THERE is nothing in a name. That which a Jewish mother did, a so-called Christian mother may do. What is the crime? A mother sacrifices her child to her own appetite: to save herself a pitiful amount of suffering, she sacrifices her child. I fear that this is a crime, a sin not unknown amongst us. I fear that we have known, that we know, children pampered and indulged by their parents, their passions unchecked, their young vices allowed to grow into full strength. And why is this? Not because it is not fully known to be surely productive of evil, pain, sorrow, ruin for the child, but because the parent cannot bear the pain to self of the necessary sternness of a parent's duty. Caution, remonstrance, coercion, correction are withheld, not for the child's sake, but the parent's. And when the sacrifice is perfected—when the career of folly and ruin has been well completed—does the Christian mother look upon her work and call it by its right name? Does she say, honestly, “I have ruined my own child—I have killed my own child—I have fed my own miserable weakness at the expense of my child's life and honour—at the expense of my child's soul?”

Let us take another view of the same subject. It is very common, it is almost a feature of the present day, to meet with young children dressed with an extravagance of ornament, which has already stamped the expression of infixed vanity even upon their infantine faces. One's first impression upon seeing the poor children, is—“Ah! that poor child has no mother!” More especially when it is an infant girl, not learning, but taught an early indelicacy of dress, and an early seeking of admiration, one exclaims, “That poor child can have no mother!” But I fear that it is not true. I fear that in many cases the mother herself is training up these poor victims to vanity and passion, and to what does she sacrifice her child? To her own appetite—to her own appetite for praise—to her own appetite for distinction. But does the Christian mother recognize her own work when it is finished? When habits of profligacy or of extravagance have driven her son from his country, an alien, perhaps a dishonoured one; when her daughter has become a mark for public shame and scandal; does she say, honestly, “This is the result of my teaching; I trained up my child for this.”

Are there any of my readers conscious that some such work is now going on in their families? Christian parents, do not forget that your children have souls. Cast aside, with disdain, the trammels of fashion, and dare to show how far more you care for God's will than for man's approval. Instead of making your children objects of mixed contempt and pity, train them up to be children of God, here and hereafter. Such alone, let us never forget, have the promise of the life which now is, as well as that which is to come.

We may trace out this principle of parental selfishness in other cases, such as the forced marriages of children, for the advancement of family connexion. Some rich man of low origin desires rank and influence, and he purchases some degraded scion of nobility to be his daughter's husband. What matters the misery which is her portion in such an alliance? She is sacrificed to her father's appetite for greatness. Or it may be the other way; it may be rank which seeks wealth. An ancient name has become humbled in its fortunes, and the unworthy possessor of the title sacrifices his child, brought up in all the delicacy of a high station, to any marriage with low habits and imperfect education, so that there be money to ratify the sacrifice. And let us not think or speak of these things, as though they belonged to high rank and wealth alone. Such sacrifices may be traced through all the grades of society; the temptation equally, pitiful, the guilt equally great, in all cases. In whatever rank he may be, the man who pays his debts or drags himself onward in the world by the sacrifice of his child's character and peace, has little to boast of as a Christian, or as a man.

We have as yet spoken of these sacrifices as being accompanied by a temptation—small enough, it is true—but still an apparent gain for the selfish parent. We may, however, look upon cases in which the sacrifice is made to a depraved and vitiated appetite on the parents' part. We may go into the homes of many of the middling and lower classes of society, and find them marked by a total absence of comfort, a general appearance of desolation, and the experienced eye at once recognises that the appetite for drinking rules there—sure forerunner of poverty, sure cause of misery. And the severest sufferers, the most certain victims, are the children of him who owns this dreadful and degrading habit. They suffer not in the body only—although they are early introduced to the worst forms of distress, those aggravated by vice, and although the appetite

brings its sure entailment of disease upon the offspring—but they suffer in the soul. Trained up by parents whom they cannot honour, accustomed in their early infancy to the contaminating associations of their parents' lives and their parents' companions, a wretched life is soon closed in a drunkard's children. And if we would see this odious sacrifice in its worst form, we must see a mother abandoned to this excess—a mother reckless of her child's comfort and peace—a mother deaf to her child's cries, her child's hunger, her child's illness—a mother heaping disease and pain upon her child—a mother rearing her young babe for infamy and despair. And let us remember that whilst this dreadful sin and its consequences may be more thrust upon us amongst certain classes of society, they are not confined to any class. We speak of human nature, and there is no sin which may not be found in any class. The clergyman and the physician, whose offices bring them behind the scenes of private life, know how often this is the disease, which is not only destroying life, but destroying happiness through an entire family. The vice, too often hereditary. The parent copies closely the Hebrew mother's sin. The child is sacrificed to appetite; born with the heavy curse of the parental sin, to find with the first dawnings of reason the early strugglings of this infatuating and destructive vice. Ah! Christians, it is often a careful inquiry before marriage, that no family disease exist. Would that there were always the same care to inquire into the existence of family sin. We shrink from the pain of having children of weak, or defective minds. Oh how infinitely worse the self-accusing pain of being parents to children who live and die like Hophni and Phinehas! like Ammon and Absalom.

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE UPON GENIUS.

It has become quite a commonplace remark, how materially the early training of a mother often affects the future destiny of men of genius. The influence and confidence gained by "that best of friends" has been known not only to direct and sustain a man through all the varied changes of his youth, but to accompany him to the grave, though absence and a lapse of years may have severed for ever the two individuals thus bound together.

CHANGE IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

"THERE'S no use trying any longer to suit Isaac Parsons," muttered this individual's better half, as she sat in a corner of the farm-kitchen, rapidly divesting a chicken of its feathers; "I've worked and slaved myself to death for him and his'n, and all the thanks I've had for the last fifteen years, has been short words and general growlin' and fault-fandin', until now I'm just determined to stand out and have my own way, or let things take their own course; and he'll find, after all, Melissy Talcott has got some spirit in her that can't be crushed out with all his abusin' and aggravation!"

"To think he should have the heart to refuse me a new carpet after he had such good luck with his wheat crop, and I jest slaved myself through harvesting and got along with one girl.

"The more that man gets, the stingier he grows, and there isn't a woman among all my acquaintances that would stand such treatment, and I won't. I'll put my foot down from this moment," setting down most emphatically that solid member of her comely person on the kitchen floor! "if Isaac Parsons won't come to terms, I'll quit him—that's all!"

Mrs. Melissy Parsons had been a remarkably pretty girl in her youth, and thirty-seven years had made her a fair and comely woman.

Her husband was a somewhat phlegmatic man, stubborn and opinionated, and as his early life and social atmosphere had not enlarged nor softened his character, the hardest and most disagreeable part of it expanded with his years. He loved money, and as the æsthetic part of his nature had never been cultivated, he regarded it as wastefulness and extravagance to indulge in much grace or beauty of surroundings.

Still there was another side to this man. His affections were deep and tender, and a judicious and loving woman could have reached and influenced him to almost any degree through these. But Mrs. Parsons never understood her husband. She was an impulsive, high-spirited, and really warm-hearted woman, with a good deal of petty social ambition, and she and her husband were constantly jarring each other.

Yet all these years the barns and store-houses, the lands and gold of Isaac Parsons increased, and God sent children—two boys and a girl—to soften the hearts of the father and mother, and to be to

them angels of a new covenant of household peace and tenderness. But alas! alas! the sweet faces and all the beautiful ministrations of childhood never accomplished their mission; and, with hearts and tempers fretted, and soured, and worn, Mr. and Mrs. Parsons counted the years growing over them, and both felt that their marriage had been a mistake and a misery, and with blind eyes that would not see, and hard hearts that would not understand, each blamed the other, and mutual recrimination only produced fresh bitterness.

At last a crisis came. Mrs. Parsons had set her heart that autumn upon a new parlour carpet, which was in nowise unreasonable, and in which her husband ought to have indulged her, but the manner of the request, which was in reality a command, at once roused the inherent stubbornness of the man, and he flatly refused her. Then followed passionate words and angry retorts, till the husband and wife separated with mutual bitterness and rage.

But now as Mrs. Parsons took up her denuded chicken and plunged it in a pan of hot water, her eyes glanced on the magazine, which lay on the table, and they settled upon this passage, which completed a short sketch:—"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, but committed his cause to Him who judgeth righteously."

And these words stole, in a still, serene, rebuking voice, through the stormy soul of Mrs. Parsons. She had read them innumerable times before, and they had for her no special message or meaning, but now God had sent his angel to drop them in her heart, and in a moment something of the real sin and wrong of her life rose up and confronted her.

She sat down in a low chair by her kitchen-table, and rested her forehead on her hand. The hard, fretful, angry look went out from her face, and was succeeded by a soft, thoughtful expression, and the sunshine hung in yearning, golden, shifting beauty about her.

And then the woman's memory went back to her first acquaintance with Isaac Parsons—he had chosen her from among a score of others who envied her that good fortune—and how those early days of their courtship came over the softened heart of the woman, as the first winds of spring come up from the south, and go softly over the bare, despairing earth. Then she saw herself once more a shy, tremulous, joyful bride at the altar, leaning on the strong arm and tender heart, to whom she gave herself gladly and trustingly, as a woman should.

And she remembered that morning a little later, when her proud and happy young husband brought her to the house which had been his father's, and how for a little while the thought of her being mistress of the great old farm-house fairly frightened the wits out of her.

She meant to make it a sweet and happy home for Isaac Parsons. She remembered, as though it had all happened yesterday, the little plans and contrivances she had made for his surprise, and their mutual comfort.

But the quarrel came. How well she remembered it, and how clearly she saw now the foolish and sinful part she had borne in that! If she had controlled her temper then—if she had only been gentle and patient, forbearing and forgiving, instead of being proud and passionate, fretful and stubborn! If she had only borne her woman's burdens, and done her woman's duties! Here the wife and the mother broke down; she buried her face in her apron, and cried like a child.

Mrs. Parsons was an energetic, determined woman, and when she had once made up her mind on any course of action, she would not shrink back from it. What went on in the softened woman's heart that morning, as she sat with her apron to her eyes, and the sobs in her rocking to and fro in her low chair, and the sweet, restless sunshine all about her—what went on in the woman's softened heart, only God and the angels know.

“Are you tired, Isaac?”

The farmer was wiping his face and hands on the brown crash towel which hung near the window. He was a tall, stalwart, muscular man, sun-browned and weather-beaten, yet he had keen, kindly eyes, and the hard features had an honest, intelligent expression. Mrs. Parsons was cutting a loaf of rye bread at the kitchen-table. Her husband turned and looked at her a moment, as though he half doubted whether he had heard aright. His wife's face was bent over the bread, and he could not see it; but the words came a second time:—

“Are you tired, Isaac?”

It was a long time since Mr. Parsons had heard that soft, quiet voice. It stole over his heart like a wind from the land of his youth.

“Well, yes, I do feel kind of tuckered out. It's hard work to get in all that corn with only one hand besides Roger.”

"I reckoned so; and I thought I'd broil the chicken for tea, and bake the sweet potatoes, as you'd relish them best so."

Mr. Parsons did not say one word; he sat down and took the weekly paper out of his pocket, but his thoughts were too busy to let him read one word. He knew very well his wife's aversion to broiled chickens, and as the kitchen was her undisputed territory, he was obliged to submit and have his chickens stewed, and his potatoes served up in sauce, notwithstanding she was perfectly aware that he preferred the former broiled, and the latter baked; and this unusual deference to his taste fairly struck the farmer dumb with astonishment, and he sat still and watched his wife as she hurried from the pantry to the table, in her preparations for tea; and then there came across him the memory of some of the harsh, angry words he had spoken during their quarrel that morning, and the words smote the man's heart.

And while Mrs. Parsons was in the midst of taking up the daintily broiled chicken, two boys and a girl burst into the kitchen.

"Hush, hush, children," wound in among the obstreperous mirth, like a silver chime, the soft voice of the mother. "Father's busy reading the paper, and you'll disturb him."

The children were silenced at once, not in fear of the reproof, but in wonder at it; for the wife as seldom consulted her husband's taste and convenience in these small, every-day matters which makes the happiness or irritation of our lives, as he did hers.

In a few moments the hungry family gathered round the table. There was little spoken at the meal, but a softer, kindlier atmosphere seemed to pervade the room. The children felt, though they did not speak of it.

"Are you going out this evening, Isaac?"

"Well, yes, I thought I'd step round to the town meetin'. Want anything at the store?" continued Mr. Parsons, as he tried to button his collar before the small, old-fashioned looking-glass, whose mahogany frame was mounted with boughs of evergreen, around which scarlet berries hung their charm of rubies.

But the man's fingers were clumsy, and after several ineffectual attempts to accomplish his purpose, Mr. Parsons dropped his hand with an angry grunt, that "the thing would not work."

"Let me try, father." Mrs. Parsons stepped quickly to her husband's side, and in a moment her hand had managed the refractory button.

Then she smoothed down a lock or two of black hair, which had strayed over the sun-burnt forehead, and the touch of those soft fingers felt very pleasant about the farmer's brow, and woke up in his heart old sweet memories of times when he used to feel them fluttering like a dream through his hair.

He looked on his wife with a softness in his face, and a smile in his keen eye, which he little suspected. And the softness and the smile stirred a fountain warm and tender in Mrs. Parsons' heart, which had not for years yielded one drop of its sweet waters. She reached up her lips impulsively and kissed his cheek. Any one who had witnessed that little domestic scene would scarcely have suspected that the married life of Isaac Parsons and his wife counted three-quarters of a score of years.

The woman's comely face was as full of shy blushes as a girl's of sixteen, and Isaac Parsons seized his hat and plunged out of the house without speaking one word, but with a mixture of amazement, and something deeper, on his face, not easily described.

But at last he cleared his throat, and muttered to himself—"Melissy shan't repent that act—I say she shan't!" and when Isaac Parsons said a thing, everybody knew he meant it.

* * * * *

The sunset of another autumn day was rolling its vestures of purple and gold about the mountains, when the waggon of Isaac Parsons rolled into the farm-yard. He had been absent all day in the city, and the supper had been awaiting him nearly an hour, and the children had grown hungry and impatient.

"Oh, father, what have you got there?" they all clamoured, as he came into the house tugging along an immense bundle tied with cords.

"It is something for your mother, children," was the rather unsatisfactory answer.

At this moment Mrs. Parsons entered the kitchen. Her husband snapped the cords and a breadth of ingrain carpeting rolled upon the floor, through whose dark green ground-work trailed a russet vine and golden leaves—a most tasteful and graceful pattern.

Isaac Parsons turned to his amazed wife—"There, Melissy, there's the parlour carpet you asked me for yesterday mornin'. I reckon there ain't many that will beat it in West Farms."

A quick change went over Mrs. Parsons' face, half of joy, half of something deeper.

"Oh, Isaac!" She put her arms round the strong man's neck, and burst into tears.

The trio of children stood still, and looked on in stolid amazement. I think the sight of their faces was the first thing which recalled Isaac Parsons to himself.

"Come, come, mother," he said, but his voice was not just steady, "don't give way now like this. I'm as hungry as a panther now, and want my supper before I do anything but put up my horse;" and he strode off to that impatient quadruped in the back yard.

So the new carpet proved an olive-branch of peace to the household of Isaac Parsons. While others admired its pattern or praised its quality, it spoke to Mrs. Parsons' heart a story of all that which love and patience may accomplish. After many struggles and much prayer, the triumph over pride, and passion, and evil habits, was at last achieved; and this was not accomplished in a day, or a month, or a year, but the "small leaven that leaveneth the whole lump," working silently and surely, completed at last its pure and perfect work, and in the farm-house of Isaac Parsons reigned the spirit of forbearance and self-relinquishment, of gentleness and love, which was given unto those "who fear God and keep his holy commandments."

A HINT TO YOUNG WOMEN.

A sensible, prudent man knows how to estimate outside adornings and artificial smiles at their real worth, which is, in fact, very low. He knows that the gay dressy flirt often makes a slatternly wife, and a still worse mother—than the girl who tries to make herself so very agreeable and bewitching, while angling for a husband, frequently turns out a very vixen when she has caught her fish; that the attractions she exhibits in public are, in most instances, the very reverse that are to be seen *at home*; in short, that though she may be such an one as many young men love to *flirt* with, she is the very last whom prudence would select for a *wife*. A female whose sole recommendation is a pretty face, and a showy dress, may excite a little attention; but when it is discovered that the attraction is external, and all is emptiness within, then the prudent man shies off, saying to himself, "This is not the girl to make a wife of."—*British Workman*.

WHAT WILL YOU DO IN HEAVEN?

It was about thirty years ago, or more, when stage-coaches still ran, that an excellent old clergyman, who had a keen observation of the world, was travelling on the top of the coach from Norwich to London. It was a cold winter night, and the coachman, as he drove his horses over Newmarket heath, poured forth a volley of oaths, and foul language, as to shock all the passengers. The old clergyman, who was sitting close to him, said nothing, but fixed his piercing blue eyes upon him with a look of extreme wonder and astonishment. At last the coachman became uneasy, and turning round to him, said, "What makes you look at me, sir, in that way?"

The clergymen said, still with his eyes fixed on him, "*I cannot imagine what you will do in heaven! There are no horses, or coaches or saddles, or bridles, or public-houses in heaven. There will be no one to swear at, or to whom you can use bad language. I cannot think what you will do when you get to heaven.*"

The coachman said nothing, the clergyman said nothing more, and they parted at the end of the journey. Some years afterwards the clergyman was detained at an inn on the same road, and was told that a dying man wished to see him. He was taken up into a bedroom in a loft, hung round with saddles, bridles, bits, and whips, and on the bed, amongst them, lay the sick man. "Sir," said the man, "do you remember speaking to the coachman who swore so much as he drove over Newmarket heath?" "Yes," replied the clergyman. "I am that coachman," said he, "and I could not die happy without telling you how I have remembered your words, *I cannot think what you will do in heaven.* Often and often, as I have driven over the heath, I have heard those words ringing in my ears, and I have flogged the horses to make them get over that ground faster; but always the words have come back to me, *I cannot think what you will do in heaven.*"

We can all suppose what the good minister said to the dying man. But the words apply to every human being, whose chief interest lies in other things than doing good, and being good, and who delights in doing and saying what is evil. There is no making money in heaven—there is no promotion—there is no gossips—there is no idleness—there is no controversy—there is no detraction in heaven. "*I cannot think what you will do when you go to heaven.*"

Let these words ring in our ears, and let us remember that nothing except sin keeps us out of heaven, and nothing except goodness through Christ, gets us into heaven.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE—THE WORTHY DAUGHTER.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S aged father had been becoming gradually blind from the access of cataract, and to read and write, and care for him, especially to comfort and cheer him, under this sore privation, became her leading concern. Her own health, too, ever delicate, was a source of constant suffering to her, and her sisters were no less invalids. Their old servant, Tabby, the unpolished but faithful domestic, was paralytic and almost helpless; for the girls would never consent that she should be dismissed, and nursed by others than themselves. The old creature, to the last, persisted in doing all those offices of kindness for the young ladies in which she fancied she excelled, one special task in which she prided herself being her skill in peeling potatoes for table. With a delicate sense of kindness, which Charlotte ever displayed after Tabby's eyes failed her, and she did most imperfectly what she fancied she had accomplished in her best manner, her young mistress used to steal away the dish from beneath her purblind vision, complete the process, and replace them on the dresser, as though no amendment had been made of the old attendant's botch-work. Had Tabby been the grandmother of the family, she could not have received more touching attentions from these admirable women; and when she died from their midst at eighty years of age, and was buried by their care, they mourned as a loss what their affectionate kindness had made a voluntary burden of nursing and maintaining for years. The regard maintained for the worn-out domestic, after infirmity had robbed her of her capacity of usefulness, speaks volumes for the merits of both parties, and, as much as their unusual endowments, endears the names of Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë to posterity. We write this sentence with no measured feelings of admiration and respect.—*Women of Worth.*

THE noblest aim of souls united in conjugal love is, so to live here, that after their last separation, whether during life or death, complete union may be accorded in heaven hereafter.

LOOK AT HOME.

WHEN once a home is regarded by the young as only a place to eat and sleep in, the work has begun that ends in public-houses and a downward career. Young people must have relaxation somewhere; if they do not find it at their own hearthstones, it will be sought at other, and perhaps less profitable places. Therefore, at night, make the homestead delightful with all those little arts that parents ought to understand. Don't repress the buoyant spirits of your children; half-an-hour of merriment round the firelight of a home blots out the remembrance of many a care during the day, and the best safeguard they can take with them into the world is the unseen influence of a bright little inner sanctum.—*Old Jonathan.*

SOME DIFFERENCE.

A FEW years ago, a little fellow, Eddy, not slow in roguery, complained that James had been throwing stones at him. The teacher inquired into the matter, and found the charge correct. She said to Eddy—

“What do you think you should do if you were teaching, and had such a boy as that?”

“I think I should flog him,” was the reply.

Upon this James began to fear the result, and so he filed in his complaint.

“Eddy threw a stone at me t’other day,” said he.

“Ah,” said the teacher, “I must know about this matter. Is it true, Eddy, that you have been throwing stones at James?”

Eddy hung his head, and confessed it. After a little thumbing of the strings, she says—

“Well, Eddy, what do you think you should do with two such boys as you and James?”

“I think,” said he, sobbing, “I should try ’em again!”

AN interval of more than forty years makes all the difference between the morning of life and its evening. What a solemn and mighty difference it is, that whereas we then beheld life before us, we now behold death.

“THE LAST FIRE,”
OR
CHANGE THE EXPERIENCE OF ALL.

A Funeral Sermon

ON THE LATE

M R. B R A I D W O O D,

(Superintendent of the London Fire Brigade,)

PREACHED ON SUNDAY, JUNE 30TH, 1861,

IN THE

N A T I O N A L S C O T C H C H U R C H,

CROWN COURT, COVENT GARDEN,

BY THE

REV. JOHN CUMMING, D.D.

LONDON:

**JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,
ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.**

F U N E R A L S E R M O N .

"Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" 2 Pet. iii. 11.

I do not intend to pass eulogiums on those that are gone, but simply, practically, and plainly, to illustrate facts that have occupied a place, and stirred the souls, and awakened interest in almost every inhabitant of London.

"All things," infidelity observed of old, "must continue as they have been from the beginning." It needs but common sense, and a fair and impartial survey of our world, to come to a very opposite conclusion. There is nothing in the world permanent but what belongs to heaven. Change, deterioration, or improvement is the experience of every man. Every soul in this assembly is descending or ascending every day, by a progression that cannot cease—we trust in many a case, ascending to that loftier table-land where all things are made new. Your bodies by their reproduction and decay are undergoing ceaseless change. Time puts on all his charms up to 45, and then after 45 he busies himself in taking them away one by one. Change is the experience of all. Your halls and your houses, from the highest to the humblest, are undergoing change. Are there not vacant chairs in them all? Are there not in all reminiscences surviving of the good, the great, the beloved who are gone? Is there not now silence where there was once—what every mother will tell you—the music of glad voices, and infants that came forth like flowers have faded and gone up higher? If we turn to our country, is there not change there? It is teeming with change in every direction. Let some in this assembly who are not the oldest, who have spent a quarter of a century in this great metropolis, take a glance backward. What changes have taken place! Were an inhabitant to rise from beneath the green turf, or a visitor who has been long absent to return, he would find London in many respects vastly changed, in all respects vastly altered. A new Parliament Palace supersedes the old venerable with a thousand associations, a new Royal Exchange supersedes the old, new play-houses have taken the place of the old, and the very streets are altered; and above all, if some old monk could rise from beneath the flag-stones of Westminster Abbey, and look upon all that has taken place

since he fell asleep, noticing the iron rail sending bright villages along its black thread, that runs out from this centre to every point of the world—noticing the change and transformation taking place all around him—he could not believe it was the same world. And the Church of Christ has been undergoing change, too. The torpor of years is broken up, lazy clergy will not be tolerated (and we rejoice at it) any longer. Ministers have ceased to be idlers; they are becoming active, energetic, working men. In the Church of England, there are vast changes for the better; in every section of the Church Universal there is a great change for the better; it may be the introduction or preliminary to that great pentecostal baptism, which will restore much that has gone wrong, and make happy many hearts that are heavy.

Such then are the evidences of change taking place everywhere. On the great earth itself a vast change will take place. I am not stating this as a thing that I fancy—not merely quoting some Sibyl leaf or traditional legend—I appeal to the words themselves. Just as there was a flood, we are told, so a day will come, when the Lord “will come as a thief in the night,” (unexpectedly) “in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” I always rejoice to quote science, not to authenticate the Bible, which would be absurd, but because it is always refreshing to be able to quote science as elucidating and bearing out the exact and minute accuracy of the Bible. We are told in the 7th verse of this chapter, “the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” Literally translated, “stored with fire are reserved unto judgment.” What a thought is that! That the very earth on which we tread is stored with fire, and the incidental conflagrations which occur are to us the evidence that the fire seems destined to be the great consuming element in our globe, where man is paralysed, and the red fire rages and triumphs, and seems to laugh at the helplessness of all the results of human skill and human science. The earth is, in fact—if I may use the expression—just like a lime kiln; charged with internal fire, repressed not by the worthiness of man, but by the long-suffering goodness of God. A core of fire in a crust of deposit composed of dead fossils, the remains of extinguished and buried dynasties constitutes the strong earth on which we tread. I will quote a passage from a celebrated American geologist, who says:—“Wherever in Europe the temperature of the air, water, or rock has been ascertained, it has been found to be higher than the mean temperature of the climate at the south. It is found that the heat of the earth increases rapidly as we descend beyond that point in the earth’s crust to which the sun’s heat extends. The mean rate of increase is 1 deg. Fahr. for every 45ft. we bore down. At this rate, at a

depth of 60 miles, (which is the mere surface of the earth's crust) everything that we can possibly imagine must be in a state of liquefaction or intense white heat." Lyell, one of the most eminent and accomplished of geologists, says:—"When we consider the combustible nature of the elements of the earth so far as they are known to us, and the facility with which the compounds may be decomposed and enter into new combinations, and the quantity of heat which they must evolve during those operations, when we recollect that water itself is composed of two gases, which, by their very union produce intense heat, we may well be allowed to wonder that a single day passes without a general conflagration."

This is not the opinion of a theologian, not the opinion of some fanciful speculator, it is the opinion, and not merely the opinion, but the demonstration of the most mature and competent of geologists. In the next place, when the Apostle says that the earth and heavens shall be on fire, to what does he compare it? To the flood. Well, now, was the flood a literal, historic fact, or was it a myth? Unquestionably it was a literal and historic fact. The Saviour's lips repeatedly pronounced it to be so. If the one dissolution was literal, and if the second dissolution is threatened—or I should say prophecied—is not that to be literal also? The flood annihilated nothing; it changed, it desolated, it deteriorated, but it destroyed or annihilated nothing. What is the law that every scientific man knows? Fire destroys nothing; it makes matter enter into new combinations. It was found in that great conflagration which seemed to be permitted just to teach us what a precarious tenure after all is our wealth, our greatness, our property, that the fire took the iron, the stone, the metal, the silver, everything that was there, and threw them into new combinations, but it annihilated nothing. So I believe the last baptismal fire that shall wrap this earth in its flame shroud, will destroy nothing but sin, imperfection, decay, and that everything that God has made, everything that Christ has redeemed shall emerge from that baptism more beautiful, more glorious, more radiant than before. The last fire will not destroy the earth. I don't believe that this earth is to be annihilated. The words here don't say so—"we look for a new heaven and a new earth"—it doesn't say we look for another heaven and another earth. We don't want another, we only want the old house put in order. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise." You cannot conceive what that noise will be from the specimens which occasionally burst forth in earthquakes and the eruption of volcanoes. A geologist, describing one of these scenes, says:—"The lava rolled on sometimes sluggishly, sometimes violently. It swept away forests, undermined vast masses of rock, finally, it plunged into the sea with the loudest and most terrific detonations." You can conceive, therefore, when he speaks of the heavens passing away with a great noise, how true it is. Then, again, he says, "the elements," the

iron, the stone, "shall melt with fervent heat." Now if the Apostle had used the expression shall be burned up, the scientific man would have said, Peter can't be inspired, because he used language incompatible with science. What is oxydisation? Only another term for burning a metal. The granite has been burned long ago, the rust on the iron is the iron being burned, "the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Out of all is to emerge a new heaven and new earth. "The earth abideth for ever," "The earth which he hath established for ever." And would it not—I appeal to the deepest sensibilities of every Christian heart—be a tremendous chasm in the orbs of the universe if this earth, on which a Saviour walked, whose air he breathed and consecrated because he breathed it, from whose streams he drank, whose ocean became to his sacred feet a beautiful promenade, if this earth, that has such glorious historic spots as Calvary, Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives. Tabor, Sion, would it not be a discord in the great harmony, a blank in the grand restoration, if an orb so rich in all that is brilliant, historic, glorious, should be annihilated and expunged from the universe? No, no! It cannot be, it is redeemed just as much as the dust we committed to the silent grave, yesterday, is redeemed, and it shall be restored to more than its pristine glory and magnificence, and a world that began with a Paradise that perished in an hour, shall end with a Paradise that shall bloom in amaranthine beauty, for ever and ever.

This last fire may change the structure of things. That fire invariably does. The most precious manuscripts have perished in the flames—paintings, each of which would be an estate, have perished in the flames—sculptures, the admiration of ages, have been calcined in the flames—and as we saw warehouses where two millions and-a-half of property were stored, have been reduced to ashes, and rendered utterly and for ever worthless—a rehearsal on a small scale of what will one day be universal. This is not my statement, I am but the echo of the voice of Peter. We had a faint foreshadow of that last great conflagration, when we saw the Thames glow as if it were molten gold—when the flames seemed in their awful and mad ecstasy as if they were living things, and rose and laughed at the mightiest efforts of the mightiest master who had ever laid his hand on them and made them still, and triumphed over all his efforts to oppose their fury, and to save the property—and the property would be nothing but for the life that accompanied it—until all perished in the flames. But what will this be—what will these burning warehouses be—what will the burning of the Parliament Houses—of the Royal Exchange—of our next door neighbour, Covent Garden Theatre—what will all combined be when compared with this world's last fire! when this earth shall be in a white heat, with a blazing atmosphere, with melting rocks, with dissolving metals, and with detonations, such as have never yet been heard, a picture of terrific grandeur, such as we have never yet seen?

But let me now take the bright side of the picture. Let it come, no matter how awful, how fierce, how intense, how universal, that last fire shall be, there are things, there are persons, there are realities that the flames must reverently retreat from and not dare for one moment to touch. The last fire that burns our orb, and sets fire to our atmosphere, cannot, dare not, may not touch the humblest Christian's immortal soul. The humblest Christian is safe there. The flame dare not enter the sacred chancel where the soul is. It can laugh at the drawn dagger. It can defy the spear point also. It triumphs over all that dares or attempts to assail it:—

"The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years:
But it shall flourish in eternal youth
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!"

It cannot be annihilated. The poorest Christian in this assembly has a soul that is fire-proof, and flood-proof, and death-proof, because it has been sprinkled with the precious blood, and clothed with the glorious righteousness of the Son of God! And in the next place, the last fire will not even destroy a Christian's body. It may be crushed by the falling of the walls of a broken-up world, it may, as many a brave soldier's has been, be torn into pieces and buried beneath the green sods of the Crimea, or under the burning sands of India—and many families in this country, and not a few in this congregation, have links that knit them to the burning sands of India—but not one atom of that body will ever perish. You say, how can what has been burned in the fire, what has been torn in pieces, or lost in the sea, be discovered? I answer, if a chemist, when a person has been poisoned, can follow and hunt that poison into every retreat into which it can go, and can produce it before a Judge and Jury, will not the great Chemist of the universe be able to trace out every stray atom of every disintegrated frame, and he who said "let there be light, and there was light," has only to say "let Abney Park Cemetery restore the crushed dead" we laid in it, amid the sympathies of hundreds of thousands yesterday, and every atom of that dust will be restored, and the grave shall open, that face shall be seen again, that voice will be heard again, that noble and manly form shall be visible again, and then shall be said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

That last baptismal fire will not destroy one good deed you have done for Christ's sake. People are so fond in the present day of building beautiful Churches—and there is nothing so beautiful—but I believe if we had more common sense we should think less of building beautiful Churches and more of collecting living stones to build a living church, whose foundation is the Rock of Ages. A cup of cold water that you have given to a poor thirsty widow—a visit you have paid to a mourner, sitting under the shadow of death—the

sympathy you have expressed—the help you have given to a poor ragged boy or girl, to educate, to cheer, to help them on the rough, hard way of life—these shall survive the last fire, and they shall be mentioned at that day, when the very words shall be music indeed—“inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my little ones, ye did it unto me.” My dear friends, these are your noblest glory. Let your ornaments not be the beautiful things of this world, but those imperishable things which the fire cannot consume, which death cannot destroy, which will be reproduced at the great white throne, not as merits—God forbid—not as your claims—“Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.” Their happiness is because “they die in the Lord,” then it is added, not that their works go before them, but their works do follow them.

And my dear friends, let me here say where death finds us is of very little consequence, or at what time we die, is of very little consequence, if we live and die in Christ. That’s the main thing. I don’t believe there’s the least accident in anything that befalls us. I don’t believe in chance at all. “I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.” You’ve often heard me say, when trying to comfort those who had relatives in the far-distant fields of battle, that “every bullet has its billet,” and when that calamity occurred the other day, that swept away perhaps one of the most useful members of this Church, to whom I referred last Sunday, there was no chance there. The scythe was peculiar, but the wheat was ripe for the master’s garner. He who has gone, I am sure was ripe. In our committees connected with our schools, ragged schools, day schools, Sunday schools, his presence was welcomed by all his brethren, and his combination of good sense, of true piety, of thorough efficiency were such that I fear we shall not soon see his like again. But what is lost to the Church below we rejoice to say has gone to the Church above, and instead of speaking and speculating about the past, and what cannot be recalled, let us draw the inference—“What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”

No one has ever lived with so little, bodily pain or sickness of any shape or sort, as I have since I began my ministry in this church. I have seen pew after pew give up its quota to the skies, and family after family not cease to be—for that is not the fact—but cease to be seen. There is not a pew here that has not strange faces in it, though I hope that they may become familiar. There is not a corner in which I do not see the marks, and traces, and memorials of change—and did I not see in these cases that our loss, as a congregation, was a contribution to the happiness of those that are gone, and to the completeness of heaven—did I not feel that this congregation is but a recruiting station for the great army of the living God, part of which has crossed the flood, and part of which is crossing now—did I not feel that we are to meet again, and that broken links

are to be restored, and that gaps are to be filled, where there is no alloy of imperfection, no misinterpretation of motives, no misconception of character, no harsh words, no thoughts that are evil—I should feel my function to be a mournful and a sad one indeed. But I know that thousands have come within these walls, and that thousands who have left for the distant parts of the earth, have testified that they got good here, not because there was eloquence, not because there was logic, not because there was something marvellous, but because there was the gospel at least in its simplicity, and the love of God in all its transforming influences, fully preached. Blessed thought, all that has been kindled upon earth of light, and peace, and joy, shall burn for ever—all of love that has blossomed in a single heart, shall be perpetuated for ever—all that God has made—you have often heard me quote a collect of the Church of England, and it has many which are most beautiful, which says, “O God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made,” now I believe that he’ll destroy nothing that he has made—all that Christ has redeemed, all that the Spirit has consecrated shall not die, nor even be overlaid, but shall be reproduced and shine in imperishable lustre for ever and ever.

The ranks of our congregation have been thinned by translations to the skies. Fill up the ranks. Many soldiers are now listening to me. You know that when a comrade falls the rest must close up, and those to whom the battle is bequeathed must act with the greater energy. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. You will not think me superstitious when I say that the spirit of our departed brother may be the spectator of those that are left behind, and if so, if one wave of bliss can rise from so poor a place to so rich a heritage—it will be to hear that you have taken up with greater zeal and greater energy the good work in which our brethren, who have gone before, have been so usefully employed. I have read in the stories of my country—and I for one hope its ancient traditions will never be forgotten—that one day, in a great battle, the chief of one of the powerful clans of the Highlands, fell back, and lay on his side. The blood ebbed from him, and his clansmen thought he was killed, and they began to fall back disheartened—and you know that, be it a regiment or a fire brigade, let the chief fall, how faint are all hearts, how feeble are all arms—raising himself, with the blood ebbing from him, upon his elbow on the green turf where he had fallen, as his countrymen always fall, with his back to the field and his feet to the foe, he said, “Macdonald, I’m not dead, but I’m watching how my children fight.” My dear friends, the great captain of the brigade is not dead, but is watching us, his children, and seeing how they walk worthy of those “who by faith have inherited the promises.”

Sketches and Essays.

WHAT IS TRUTH ?

BY THE REV. SAMUEL KING BLAND, CHESHAM, BUCKS.

TRUTH is, in England, exactly what it is in Russia. It is, in 1861, entirely and exclusively what it was before the flood ; and the second advent of the King of kings will create no new truth, falsify no old truth, nor exalt one ancient fiction into reality.

Truth is God's by right, by origin, by choice. The being and attributes of God are not only true harmony, but the unity of truth. In the infinite there exists not truths, but truth ; for essential, eternal, unchanging truth is one. While its aspects are numerous, its influences diverse, its voices a multitude, its beauties varied, its triumphs "a cloud," its spirit, its integrity, its heart is one.

Truth is God's by right, ours by gift. By infinite, original wisdom, God comprehends all truth. By affectionate, condescending authority, God declares that truth fitted to the reception and good of his subordinates.

God knows all truth—always—all at once. God reveals truth by measure, in time, place, and subject.

God is true, God is light, in God is no darkness ; God cannot lie (deceive) ; God lives in truth ; thinks, speaks, acts, loves in truth. All that is true owns God as its Father. All who love truth own God as their Father ; and the father layeth up for, teacheth, guideth his children ; and as many as are led by his Spirit they are his sons, "Therefore, if any lack wisdom, let him ask of God ;" and the result shall be the delighted devotion, "Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

No creature can understand all truth ; this is the Creator's sole prerogative. The knowledge of all creatures together comprehendeth not all truth.

The faultless creature is yet imperfect in knowledge ; for the

The Mother's Magazine, September. 1861.

creature is in course of education, yet can never know beyond the power of creatureship.

What the limit of that power be or shall be we may not even guess. The daybreak of immortality dazzles our earthly gaze; even its dim reflection overwhelms the humble, teachable soul. What is its meridian splendour?

Sin is a lie. Its interest and spirit is to darken the mind, to conceal the truth, to hinder the light, to falsify the testimony of righteousness, to obtrude the question, "Hath God said?"—Gen. iii. 1.

The axioms of sin are false; the promises of sin are deception; the pleasures of sin are a mockery: the indulgences of sin are the poison seed of the soul's death. The sorrow of sin alone is real; for trouble, disappointment, and misery are the judgment of the true upon the false, of the good upon the evil. Truth is an uncompromising enemy, an unrelenting foe, but only against sin—the lie. The nature of truth, and the will of its author, are alike opposed to a falsehood, whether in conception, doctrine, or action; for God loves truth.

"God's will be done, as in heaven, so on earth." This is the righteous anticipation alike of the sinless host upheld and of the saved Church redeemed. This the longing cry of every sin-burdened heart whose chains are bursting before the emancipation of truth—yielding to the conquering love of the anointed deliverer. This the fulness of the promises of our Father to his sons and daughters, far and near.

God knoweth our frame—meteth out the knowledge of his will as we are able to bear it—never withholdeth a beneficial gift—ever gives enough to lead the soul to himself.

The glimpses of the truth to an infant age afforded just that light which made the faithful of those days successful, waiting watchers. The allegorical, unfolding, the dreaming visionary teaching of a prophetic age, led on and confirmed the believer's hope; and while they died in faith, not having received the promises, yet through a glass (dimly) they saw them afar off, and, embracing them, left the lies of a godless world behind, and patiently travelled on, looking for a better country, even a heavenly. But the God of Truth, who spake in divers ways unto the fathers, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son; hath said the same things, given the same ground of hope, opened the one ancient way of peace.

Simeon rejoiced in the very day of Christ which Abraham with gladness saw. And Jesus stood forth, the foundation, the centre, the crown of all truth. Jehovah placed all fulness in him, and was well pleased therewith. Christ fulfilled the decree of the volume, and, turning to his Father, cried, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do;" then toward man, exclaiming, "I am the truth, learn of me." Oh for grace to reply, "Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths! Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation!"

REST FOR THE WEARY SOUL.

"Rest for the weary soul!" It is the aspiration of universal humanity. It is the repose of life, not of death. This rest, that the soul covets so longingly, is nothing more nor less than harmony of action. It is at once apparent that there can be no rest nor ease in discordant movements—nothing but chafing and discomfort; and surely none in inaction or idleness. The whole secret and element of happiness may be expressed in two words—harmonious activity. There must not only be harmony in the soul itself—in its whole structure and organism, in the play of all its parts and the interior with the exterior; but between the soul and its outer relations—the body and its surroundings, and the occupations in which the soul engages; also in its connections with other souls. The great aim of Providence is to complete this whole circle of harmonious movements in the soul and out of the soul: it is only completed in eternity. There it will be found that the true rest takes its rise from the centre, and spreads to the circumference—perfect individual regeneration; a consequent harmonious outward world; congenial minds in association; and a multitude of agreeable pursuits and pastimes, varying incessantly with the ever-varying wants of the soul: such is the heavenly rest. We can hence appreciate that genuine repose, which has been the dream of artists and the theme of genius in all ages of the world, but which the Spirit of God can only effect in regeneration—a state of liberty from all the lusts and fallacies of the natural man, a Seventh-day, the Sun-day of the soul. Yes! there is a sun-shine of the soul. The Sublime Orb, that hangs in glory and effulgence in the spiritual heavens, sending its light and heat through all the regions, may shine into our hearts and impart to us of its warming beams.

TO LIVE A LIFE FOR HEAVEN.

SOME people believe, that, to live a life which leads to heaven, is difficult by reason that they have been told, that they must reject worldly things which consist chiefly in riches and honours, that they must walk continually in pious meditation about God, salvation, and eternal life, and that they must spend their life in prayer and in reading the Word and other pious books; this they call renouncing the world and living in the Spirit, and not in the flesh; but they who renounce the world and live in the Spirit, as thus described, procure to themselves a sorrowful life, which is not receptive of heavenly joy; for every one's life remains with him after death. But to the intent, that man may receive the life of heaven, it is altogether necessary that he live in the world and in employment there, that by moral and civil life he receive spiritual life.

That it is not so difficult, as is generally supposed, to live a life which leads to heaven, may be seen from what follows. Who cannot live a civil and moral life, since every one from infancy is initiated into it, and from life in the world is acquainted with it? Every one also brings it into act, the bad and the good alike; for who is not willing to be called sincere? and who is not willing to be called just? Almost all exercise sincerity and justice in their outward conduct, insomuch that they appear as if they were sincere and just in heart. The spiritual man ought to live in like manner, but only with this difference, that the spiritual man believes in a Divine Being, and that he acts sincerely and justly, not merely because it is agreeable to civil and moral laws to do so, but also because it is agreeable to divine laws.

That it is not so difficult to live the life of heaven, therefore, is evident from this consideration, that nothing more is necessary than for a man to think when anything presents itself to him, which he knows to be insincere and unjust to which he is inclined, that it ought not to be done, because it is contrary to divine precepts. If he accustom himself so to think, and from so accustoming himself acquires the habit, he then becomes heavenly-minded; then, by degrees the higher principles of his mind are opened, and so far as these are opened, so far he sees what is insincere and unjust; and in proportion as he sees these evils, in the same proportion they can be shaken off; for it is impossible that any evil can be shaken off until

it be seen: this is a state into which man may enter from a free principle; for who is not capable of thinking, as above, from a principle of freedom? But, when man has made a beginning, then the Lord operates all sorts of good with him, and gives him the faculty, not only of seeing evils but also of not willing them and finally of holding them in aversion; this is meant by His words: "My yoke is easy and my burden light."

MEDITATIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

V.

Give us this day our daily bread.—Matt. vi. 11.

It is remarkable that in this brief and solemn prayer, this is the first petition we are directed to offer for ourselves, and that this relates to the bread that perisheth, and not that which endureth to everlasting life. But the blessing itself being of the first necessity, and first in the order of nature, though not in point of importance, it is here allowed to take precedence of all the rest. Our heavenly Father is not unmindful of our temporal wants, nor does he require that we should be indifferent towards them; we are rather encouraged to ask for them, because "he knoweth that we have need of these things." Those who teach that temporal blessings were promised under the law, but are not included under the present dispensation, on account of its superior spirituality, do not understand the gospel; for its leading article is, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things."

In placing this petition first, our Lord also designs to teach us our dependence upon God as creatures, as well as our obligations to him as sinners. It is in him we live, and move, and have our being, as well as by his grace that we are what we are as christians; and as we are more immediately sensible of our temporal necessities, and are made to feel these before we can possibly feel any other, it is with infinite propriety that we are allowed to offer this as our first request, with regard to ourselves. Yet it must be observed, that in the arrangement of this prayer, it is preceded and followed with supplications for spiritual blessings; to teach us, no doubt, that they must be first and last in our thoughts. There is also only one

petition for temporal mercies, while there are many for those which are spiritual; for as the latter include the former, in possessing them we possess all things, and have less need to be solicitous about the things of the present life.

We are here instructed to ask of God only what is absolutely needful, and nothing that is superfluous. Bread is mentioned as equivalent to the necessities of life: this the Lord has promised, and nothing more. "My God shall supply all your need. Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed. Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant." We are not warranted to pray for any of the superfluities of life, nor even to desire them. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." If God be pleased to give us them, it is well; and our concern should be to devote them to his glory. But to covet wealth, or set our hearts on these things, as the means of personal gratification, is highly dangerous. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; for they that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." This spirit indicates a desire of being independent of God, and of possessing something in which we ourselves may glory. This is what Agur dreaded and prayed against, saying, "Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me." That which causes men to covet riches is generally a spirit of ambition, or a desire to vie with their superiors, which leads to ruin both in this world and that which is to come. There are very few men that do not make a foolish use of riches; the generality who gather them together, are only heaping up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Oh how much better is it to feel as Jacob did, when he made a vow, and said, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God."—Gen. xxviii. 20—22.

In teaching us to pray, "give us this day our daily bread," our Lord would have us be without carefulness, and without anxiety about the future. We must exercise an habitual dependence upon God, asking not for years to come, but this day for daily bread. In this way the Lord fed his people in the wilderness, giving them

manna to gather every morning round about their tents; and thus must all his saints depend on him. It is suitable to a state of trial, and to a life of faith, to live daily upon the divine care, in whatever circumstances we are placed, whether in affluence or in poverty. It is not improper indeed to exercise a prudent forethought about futurity, with respect to the things of this life; but all that kind of corroding care which destroys our dependence on God, and nourishes our impatience and unbelief, is both sinful and injurious. By dividing and distracting our thoughts, it incapacitates us for holy duties, or renders us unprofitable in them; and nothing is more inimical to the religion of the heart, than to be drunken with the cares of this life. So precarious also is the present state of things, that we know not whether we shall live till to-morrow; of what avail is it, therefore, to be anxious about futurity.

Diseases stand thick thro' all the ground,
To hurry mortals home;

And we know not what a day may bring forth. The rich fool, in the gospel, was full of anxious care about the future, when lo, that very night his soul was required of him. Innumerable evils are feared but not felt; anticipated but never realized; so little do our cares avail. On all these subjects, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. To live daily on the divine bounty, is to live secure. "Lord, give us this day our daily bread."

This inimitable prayer also teaches us to feel for the wants of others, as well as our own; every petition of which is to be offered up with fraternal affection, and in behalf of all the family of our heavenly Father. Give—not me only—but us, our daily bread. Nothing is farther from the gospel than a spirit of selfishness, or a desire to eat our morsel alone. We must love our neighbour as ourselves, and seek his good in connection with our own, or we cannot be christians. In being directed to pray that the wants of others may be supplied, as well as our own, we are forbid to envy those who possess more of the comforts of life than ourselves, while we are expected to feel benevolently towards such as are in circumstances of poverty and distress. Humanity indeed would teach us to feel another's woe, much more the spirit of the gospel; but to prove our prayer to be sincere, it becomes us to pity and relieve the

poor and needy, as far as within our power, and by no means to injure or oppress them. "Hereby perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" In praying for our daily bread, we are also reminded that industry and uprightness is required of us; that we may not eat the bread of idleness, but that which is our own, and which is procured by lawful and honourable means.

All our common mercies, as well as our superior ones, are the effect of free and unmerited favour; and hence we are taught to pray that God would give us our daily bread, as a boon which we could not demand. We are dependent on the bounty of God for all that we possess; the least as well as the greatest enjoyment, is alike from him. He is the God of all comfort, and the Father of the whole creation; he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. The eyes of all wait on thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season; thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing. As creatures, we are dependent upon him, but as sinful creatures, still more so; and all we receive is a free gift. Every blessing is forfeited by sin. We are poor and wretched, it is true; but having no claim on the divine bounty, we might have remained so for ever. By our daily provocations, we forfeit our daily mercies; and nothing but unmerited goodness repeats and continues their bestowment.

Though our supplies do not come immediately from the divine hand, but through the medium of second causes, yet we are not less dependent than we should be, if our food were produced by miracle. God is the Father of a great family, and all second causes are his servants, whom he employs to feed his children, while he himself is the giver of all good. Many indeed earn their bread by hard labour before they eat it; but it is God that gives them health and strength for labour, and who in his providence furnishes the means of employment. Others derive their support from prudent management, as well as from labour; yet are they not less dependent upon God for the abilities which they possess. If the ploughman opens and breaks the clods of the ground, and after having made plain the face thereof, he casts abroad the fitches, and scatters the cummin, and

casts in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rye in their place—it is because his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. Or if we have property of our own, sufficient for all the necessities and comforts of life, yet whatever we possess in this world is from God, who dispenses his favours as he pleases. He could have given that wisdom, or that wealth to another, or have sent destruction on our property, in a thousand ways, and left us as destitute as Job. Every thing tends to convince us of our entire dependence upon God, and the propriety of constantly offering up this request—"Give us this day our daily bread."—Deut. viii. 10—18. Isaiah xxviii. 23—26. Eccles. ix. 11. ; xi. 6.

It will be our wisdom to see and acknowledge the hand of God in all that we possess; the more we see of this, the sweeter will all our enjoyments become, and the more grateful shall we feel. Without this, riches may be given us for our hurt. And how happy for the believer, that he is permitted to make God acquainted with the meanest of his concerns, assured that in every thing he careth for him. Oh, to have such a Father and such a friend in this world of trouble; who would not but be a Christian! He not only provides us bread to eat, and raiment to put on, until we come to our Father's house in peace, but he also gives us the true bread that cometh down from heaven, that we may eat and live for ever.

THE SERVICE OF WAITING.

"STAND and wait!" said Gerald, sorrowfully; "that is all I can do now, Helen."

"Waiting for 'showers of blessing,'" she replied. "Do you not remember the promise—'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.' God is only preparing you for further service. After a ship has been some years at sea, you know, she is called into the docks, carefully examined, and then repaired and refitted—all that was worn out being "renewed"—while at sea this could not be done. Is it not as if our God had called you now into harbour, out of the busy sea of life, that your strength may be renewed for a further voyage, and all your need supplied 'according to his riches in

glory by Christ Jesus?" But when you were lying so weary this morning, it was such a joy to me to remember that the highest praise given to Enoch was that he 'walked with God;' for I knew that you could as really walk with him now, as when you were actively engaged in his service all the day long."

"You have always 'a word in season for one that is weary,' dear Helen," he replied. "You are right; for I think the walking with God simply means the perfect agreement of our will with his; for, as it says in Amos, 'Can two walk together except they be agreed?'"

"And then," added Helen, "Jesus has left us an example that we should follow his steps. We know that he always walked with God; and yet, for thirty years, his was a life of patient 'waiting,' for his 'hour had not yet come' for working. What deep lessons we may learn from those quiet thirty years! we are so apt to run without being sent."

"We are, indeed," he replied; "but it is only waste of time—God will bring us back again to the point whence we started. There can be no blessing on anything we do, if he has not sent us; for in that case we must do it in our own strength, and alone, for God will not leave his path for ours, though he will bring us back to his again, faint and weary, it may be, with our wanderings off the narrow road, where only we can walk with God."

"If two people walk together on a narrow road," said Helen, "they must keep close to each other; and is it not only by keeping close to God that we can walk with him?"

"Yes," answered Gerald, "I like that thought; and it is only when walking closely with him, too, that we can watch the guiding of his eye, and catch the whispers of his voice, and feel the everlasting arm supporting us when we are weary."

"And no matter how dark our path may be, if we walk close to him we shall not stumble or lose our way," said Helen.

"No, indeed," replied Gerald; "and, besides, we know that 'the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'"

THE beauty of the Christian religion is, that it carries the order and discipline of heaven into our very fancies and conceptions, and, by hallowing the first shadowy notions of our minds, from which actions spring, makes our actions themselves good and holy.

THEN I MUST DIE !

SUCH were the last words of one who not long ago went to his great account. He had lived more than four score years. He had travelled over many parts of the world. He had accumulated great wealth. He had been favoured all his life with good health, scarcely knowing from experience what sickness was. At eighty-four, he was a hale, erect old man, with buoyant spirits, and expecting to live on for several years longer. But suddenly came the messenger at last. Only one stroke was given, but that was a mortal thrust. Medical skill could not meet it, and after a few vain attempts, the physician was obliged to tell the poor old man that he could not possibly recover, and would not live many hours at furthest. He received the intelligence without much emotion, and apparently without a prayer. "Then," said he, "I must die!" He turned himself round on his side, spoke no more, and within one hour was in eternity.

Death—how inevitable to all. "I must die." Solemnity, certainty, personality are found in these three words. Death is indeed solemn, and to each one most certain. Death—how terrible to the unpardoned. To those to whom earth is desirable, and distance from God a chosen element; who have heard of mercy and put it from them; who have been invited to Jesus and refuse to go, till at death's bidding they must go, oh, how saddening is death to such !

Think, O think of the difference between dying in your sins and dying in Christ. Jesus saith, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." How terrible to carry craving desires, and tyrannous passions into eternity, where they cannot be gratified, and where, like vultures, they will feed on the soul for ever. But they who believe on Jesus, shall prove that he saves from sin now, and shall have in death the blessed hope of a sinless and happy eternity. If we would find it so, we must be one with Jesus now. If we go to him, he will receive us, and will say, "Abide in me." Thus abiding in him as a safe refuge, and a heavenly root, we shall be safe and sanctified. For us to believe will be Christ, and to die gain. Then when the message comes, the soul will rejoicingly say, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." "I must die," but "I will fear no evil."

"Lord, when I quit this earthly stage,
Where shall I fly but to thy breast?
For I have sought no other home.
For I have found no other rest."

THE INTRODUCTION OF INOCULATION INTO ENGLAND.

“LADY Mary Wortley Montagu brought back with her a great reputation as a traveller, and the valuable knowledge of inoculation, which she was determined to introduce into England. She had observed the practice in the villages of Turkey, where it was generally performed by an old woman with a good-sized needle. She had a very natural horror of the small pox, which had carried off her only brother, to whom she was tenderly attached, and had visited herself in a very severe manner. Of the effects of this attack, she wrote a description in one of her ‘Town Eclogues,’ in which Flavia laments the destruction of her beauty. Fortunately, however, the disease left few traces on her face; but one of its effects was to destroy her eyelashes, thus impairing the softness of the expression, giving her eyes that fierce look which worked such a spell over Pope, who has immortalised them. Her first trial of the cure which she had thus discovered was made, with great magnanimity, on her own son, with whom it succeeded admirably; and with a patriotism which entitles her to the gratitude of her country, she determined, on her return, to introduce it into England. This was no quiet, no pleasant task, for, instead of a national benefactress, she was hailed as a demon. The faculty prophesied disastrous consequences; the clergy preached against ‘the impiety of thus seeking to take events out of the hands of Providence;’ and the ignorant and foolish declaimed against her. Yet the repeated success of the operation brought it, though gradually, into favour; and Lady Mary had the courage and the patriotism to persevere. A commission of four physicians was deputed by government to watch the effect of it upon her own daughter; and when this was found satisfactory, poor Lady Mary had to endure the fresh persecution of too much popularity, and her house was turned into a species of consulting place for every one who could claim the slightest acquaintance with her, until, in the course of four or five years, the safety and advantages of the operation were firmly established.”—*The Queens of Society*.

WHEN we pray for any virtue, we should cultivate the virtue as well as pray for it. The form of your prayers should be the rule of your life. Every petition to God is a precept to man.

OLD MARLBOROUGH DYING.

"AT last the health of this remarkable woman began to fail. 'Old Marlborough' was dying, was the court news of the day. Her doctors said she must be blistered or she must die. 'I won't be blistered,' she cried out, 'and I won't die.' She began to say that she cared not how 'soon the stroke of death came.' She still dictated to Hooke from her bed six hours a day, and played on a hand-organ, the eight tunes of which pleased her, she said, more than an opera. She had three dogs, whom she esteemed more than human beings. She was wrapped up in flannels, and carried about like a child, or wheeled in a chair; nevertheless, she continued to snarl and rail at the world, to hate Sir Robert Walpole and Queen Caroline, yet to remain a Whig, and to be as keen and as clear in all that concerned her immense property as ever. She was alive to any depredation. Having sent a rich suit of clothes to be made by Mrs. Buda, a fashionable dressmaker, she missed some yards in her dress when it came home. She resolved to punish the fraud. Mrs. Buda had a costly diamond ring on her finger. The duchess pretended to admire this ring, and asked a loan of it for a pattern. In a few days she sent it to Mrs. Buda's forewoman, saying it was to be shown to her mistress as a pledge that a certain piece of cloth should be returned. The cloth came back, upon which the ring was placed on Mrs. Buda's finger, the duchess at the same time convicting her of her offence. She was now fading slowly but surely away; bitter to the last. She seems to have rested much on the fact that she had never 'deceived any one.' She performed some generous actions. Child's bank being nearly ruined by a quarrel with the Bank of England, she drew a check on the Bank of England in favour of Child's for a hundred thousand pounds. Until the 6th of October, 1744, she was capable of transacting her own business; on the 18th of that month she sank to rest, at Marlborough House, aged eighty-four. She had been the favourite of nature and fortune; but as a wife and a woman, her character was at once wanting in sweetness and in elevation."—*The Queens of Society*.

THE service of God may become, beyond all other kind of labour, the most perfect rest of the soul.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

THE atmosphere in which the believer should live, should be the atmosphere of love — love towards Christ above him, and love towards man around him. And yet, sad thought! how deficient are most Christians in this greatest of all virtues! Where is that “suffering long,” which should lead us to bear with one another’s infirmities and peculiarities, and to do so with “kindness”? Where is that absence of self-seeking, and that desire that others may prosper rather than ourselves? Where is that meekness under provocation, which returns the soft answer, and strives to allay every irritable feeling? Where that wish to attribute kind motives as instigating the actions of our fellow-creatures, rather than unkind ones?—that “thinking no evil,” which, if indulged more frequently, would save us from many a bitter pang or false suspicion? Where that spirit which is ever ready to hope and to believe the best, to look on the bright side of our neighbour’s character, and take a favourable view of it?

Christian reader! how stands this matter with you? Can you say, “I have that love in my heart which suffers long and is kind; that love which envies not; that love which seeketh not her own; that love which is not easily provoked; that love which thinketh no evil; which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things?” If so, then indeed you may rejoice, for you possess that which will be of more profit to you than even the understanding of all mysteries or the possession of all knowledge. If you feel that your heart cannot give a ready response to the text, then make the want of this love a continual subject of prayer, and never rest till you have got more of it. “Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.”—(1 John iv. 7, 8.)

HAPPY SERVICE.

WHEN the Queen of Sheba came to visit Solomon, she was so struck with the grandeur and magnificence of his palace, the order and supplies of his household, the wisdom he communicated, and the gracefulness of his utterances, that she considered it both happiness and honour to be allowed to serve in his court: she therefore exclaimed, “Happy are

these thy servants."—2 Chron. ix. 7. But I have been thinking if the servants of Solomon were happy, how much more happy must the servants of Jesus be. Yes, they are happy, and that on many accounts; we will confine our attention to two.

First, because they are connected with the King. They are of the court, and of the court of the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Solomon is in every sense outdone by him. Solomon was wise, but in him dwelleth all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Solomon's wisdom was a drop; his an ocean. Solomon's a tiny spark; his a glorious sun. Solomon was wealthy, but Jesus has unsearchable riches. All created wealth is his, and all the uncreated riches of Deity are his too. Solomon was honoured, but Jesus has a name above every name, a throne above every throne, and a kingdom above every kingdom. In wisdom, wealth, and honour he is unequalled, and his servants share in all. Happy are his servants.

Second, because employed by such a Sovereign. In his service they are sure of the best provision, and plenty of it; they obtain good wages, and they are promptly paid; they receive many and great gifts; they enjoy various pleasures; and they have the promise of eternal life. Fed with the choicest food, even bread from heaven, possessing peace of conscience, receiving innumerable tokens of Divine love, enjoying high and hallowed communion with God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and looking forward to eternal life, which includes glory, honour, and immortality, they are truly happy. Yes, with much more propriety may we say, of the servants of Jesus than the Queen of Sheba said of Solomon's, "Happy are these thy servants." May their happiness be mine!

"Does Jesus want any servants now?" He does. Will you, my reader, engage to be one? Or, if you are one of the happy servants of Christ, will you endeavour to engage more? "What kind of persons will he engage?" Any and all who are willing to serve him. Such as you are, and you, if you are not yet already engaged to him. "How does he engage them?" When any one really wishes to be a servant of Christ, he comes to him, in prayer he bows before him, he makes the proposal to him, and agrees to accept of his terms. Or he yields his heart to Jesus, and engages to serve him; and so the bargain is struck. "How will he treat his servants?" Ask any one of them, and they all will unite to testify that he treats them as his children—with the utmost kindness, gentleness, and love. His treatment of them

is most honourable, far above their highest expectations. "What servants does he like best?" He likes to engage his servants while they are young, therefore he says, "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." But whether young or old, if they wish to serve him he engages them; and then loves to see them earnest and energetic, meek and humble, whole-hearted and decided in his cause. "What will be the portion of his servants when their work on earth is done?" Hear his own words, "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." Wherever he is, his servants will be. Whatever he has, his servants will share with him. Whatever he is, his servants will be like him. Well, then may we say, "Happy are these thy servants." Happy in their state, happy in their connection, happy in their employment, and happy in their eternal prospects!

Reader, are you a servant of Christ? Have you engaged yourself to him? If not, will you? Jesus is ready to engage you: he has a situation that will just suit you; all he will say to you will be, "Go and serve me, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive."

THE ART OF DOING OUR BEST.

"THE 'Art of doing our Best' is the most useful, although, perhaps, the least practised of all arts. How often we hear the world say, 'such and such a boy is so clever—he can do anything he likes;' but that is a grand mistake; as it is one thing to be naturally clever and quick, but quite another thing to be able to do 'anything' one likes—if without that steadiness of purpose and thoroughness which is the 'Art of doing our Best.' When I hear that said of any boy I am interested in, I tremble for the future of the lad, lest, in the long run, that very boy may be the one who does nothing; because doing so many things easily, he does not do one thing well. He will, perhaps, trust too much to his natural ability carrying him through the several careers of school, college, his profession, or business; but his ability will be powerless either to make him good or great, if he be not also persevering. . . . It does not follow that because all are not equally called upon to perform great deeds or actions, all are not required to 'do their best;' for a little thing well done may require the same amount of perseverance and real greatness as the heroic deeds or dazzling genius of the 'great' of this world. . . . Natural talent will do much, but perseverance may do more; while the two combined may conquer everything."

MORAL HINDRANCES TO SALVATION.

A S E R M O N

PREACHED

ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUG. 4th, 1861,

BY THE

R E V. T. B I N N E Y,

AT THE WEIGH-HOUSE CHAPEL.

LONDON:

JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,

North-side St. Paul's Churchyard, and Paternoster Row.

1861.

The Family Preacher.

MORAL HINDRANCES TO SALVATION.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUG. 4, 1861,

BY THE REV. T. BINNEY,

AT THE WEIGH-HOUSE CHAPEL.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”—1 Cor. i. 18.

THE appearance which an object presents is according to the position from which it is viewed. Some of us who are here to-day have been on both sides of the Equator, and from each position have, perhaps, seen the moon rising. Viewed from the northern side, the outside curve of the orb, when the moon is not at full, is towards the right; viewed again from the south, it will be exactly the other way. And yet it is the same moon. Different positions of men in relation to an object, or a change of position in the same man may make that object appear directly the reverse. It is the same with matters of thought and feeling. A thoroughly licentious man, steeped in impurity—an utterly fraudulent and unjust man—a thoroughly selfish man—cannot comprehend acts of self sacrifice, of high honour, of distinguished purity. When you speak to some gross, sensual mind, buried in the flesh, and set before it some disinterested beautiful form of action, the man will say, “I do not believe it.” “But,” you say, “it was done; I saw the man do it.” “Well, then, the more fool he.” The state of mind and feeling gives colour to an object, and influences the judgment.

And so a change may be produced by a person having changed the point of observation. It is not extravagant; it is not beyond what is possible; it is even likely to be true that the rulers of the Synagogue, of whom we read in two portions of Scripture, may have

been one and the same man. A comparatively prosperous man, sitting in the Synagogue honoured and looked up to, would naturally be inclined to say, "Why do ye come on the Sabbath, are there not six days when ye can come to be healed? Don't come disturbing us on this day." Aye, but when that man's little daughter lies at the point of death, and his wife says to him, "Did not you see that hand cured? Did not the Prophet who has just risen up do it? Oh, go to him, perhaps he will save my child," the man's heart is all broken, and his fatherly tenderness comes forth, and he is ready to believe anything. No longer is he thinking or telling the people that there are six days when they may come and be healed. At any time, at any hour, to any place he will go, and cry, "Lord, come and heal my daughter. Lord, thou canst do anything." And when the Lord answers, "Yes, I can do anything if thou canst believe," he replies, "Yes, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." What a complete change there is in the man now. He is standing in a different position, and looking at the object in a different light. He is ready to accept the service, and to be blessed through the power of him whom he once scowled upon in the Synagogue.

The apostle gives us a contrast here—the same object, looking so differently, and operating so differently on two different classes of persons. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

Let us look at this. There is matter in this verse for a dozen sermons, but let us give to the subject this morning a very brief, quiet meditation.

"The preaching of the cross." Of course we might expound from that phrase all that we understand by the peculiarities of the central truth of the gospel; the Lamb of God bearing our sins in his own body on the tree—lifted up, that he might draw all men unto him—dying for our sins that he might rise for our justification, and open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. The spiritual fortunes of the world, are, so to speak, suspended in this fact—the death of the Son of God. This was what the apostle declared and set forth. The apostolic message was to tell the world of a Christ, and of what he effected by his sacrifice and death. But we will not go into that now. For us this morning, it will do to say, "The preaching of the gospel—the preaching and setting forth of christian truth—is to them that perish foolishness, but to us which are saved it is the power of God."

Now let us understand the idea conveyed in the words, "them that perish," and "us which are saved." These words express and set forth the position of the two classes; and observe, they are the result of the relation of those classes to something which is fixed and unalterable. Those who have rejected this are inveterate in their unbelief and perishing in their sins; they have their backs to the cross, and are going down to inevitable perdition. Those who have believed the

gospel and accepted it are standing with their faces to the truth, and receiving its light. The apostle, it seems to me, is here giving the result of this subjective experimental process, through which the men have passed. It may be, and doubtless is, with respect to each, according to the state of mind in which they come up first and look at the object, but I think here the apostle means to say as to men who have undergone a certain subjective process, that the result comes to be this; both have come near to the truth, both have their thoughts, feelings, opinions with respect to it, but the one then departs, whilst the other stays and opens his soul to its whole influence. Unto them that perish it is foolishness; but unto us which are saved—undergoing this process of spiritual development and becoming more and more fitted for the upper life—it is the power of God.

And there is philosophy in this, depend upon it. It is not only true that you will find in the Bible pretty much what you bring to it—that the Book will at the very first speak to you according to the way in which you approach it—but it is also true that according to the way you use it and act towards it, it will be to you, and you will be to it. The preaching of the cross—God's truth spoken before men, to them that are perishing, that have turned their backs upon it, is foolishness, but to them that have embraced it, and felt its sanctifying influence, it is the power of God. Brethren, two or three thoughts are suggested here. We will suffer Paul to expound this matter himself. Let us look at the process through which the minds of different men, according to St. Paul, may pass for this first result to be arrived at, and then, of course, the opposite process is that through which the mind must pass in order for the second result to be produced. The way in which some men arrive at this result is in this wise. They begin with an intellectual mistake—a piece of mental perversity; they lay down rules to God. The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. They demand, first of all, as the very condition of their giving attention to the truth, a certain species of evidence, which they choose and designate. One says, "I must have signs; it is not enough for me to be called upon to listen to the word, and examine the truth, and put it to the test; I want a particular species of evidence, first of all, and I will not stir a step unless I have it." Another says, "About that I do not care so much, but I want to see into the depth and mysteries of things myself. I want to employ faculty and power, in finding out truth, and in forming a system which shall commend itself to my reason, and be constructed and manipulated by the power that God has given me, and I hold signs, and voices, and inspiration, and all pretensions to divine authority as worthless." The one man you see will not listen because he has not this preternatural species of evidence, whilst the other will not because he cannot satisfy his ideas of what the truth should be. The apostle says that both are

wrong; and holding it to be so, he just stands forth, not heeding either, and proclaims the truth—God's truth—believing that there is a self-evidencing power in it, if the intellect and the heart are only open with docility to let it come in with full play.

The apostle mentions another way in which this result is arrived at. You will easily see that the principle is the same whether a man says "I demand a particular kind of evidence," or whether he does not believe there can be any miracle at all. In both cases the principle is the same. It is a previous question which the man determines for himself, and which he has no right to determine before he comes and examines and considers. But, says the apostle, there is another process, and that is by religious prejudice. Not merely has the man determined a preliminary question but he has a religion, an interpretation, a system, aye and a book and an exposition of it, and he does not choose to move or to change. It is not necessary he considers for him to go any further, and hence, the apostle says, with respect to many of his brethren the Jews, that they have a veil upon their heart. That spiritual faculty of theirs and that eye that needs to be enlightened, why there is such a heap of rubbish, of old rabbinical exposition and external traditional interpretation of the old Mosaic records—there is such a heap of rubbish lying upon that faculty and covering over that eye that they cannot see. They will not throw it off. They are satisfied to remain just as they are. Through their bigotry and prejudice they cannot see the meaning of that which is abolished and which was meant to be abolished. Their whole spiritual nature is swathed as it were with this veil and it cannot be cast off. And so it is with a great many forms of settled, determined opinions, philosophical or religious, which men do not choose to search to their foundations with a view to see whether it is not possible after all that God may have further light to dispense.

And now the apostle says there is another process. Not only the intellect—not only the spiritual faculty is perverted—but worse, and perhaps worst of all, there is subjection to the world, the flesh and the devil. There are habits of sin. Perhaps a great deal of this is nothing more than a belief that pleasure is pleasant—a yielding to the appetite, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. He is a consistent believer whose faith is proved by his works, and there is a belief which brings forth the works of the flesh and of the devil. Now the apostle says "If our Gospel be hid—if the divine, spiritual thing that I set forth before the reason and the intellect is hid—if its divine beauty is withheld from the mind—if it does not seem to have features of attraction and does not operate upon some minds—it is because the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the glorious gospel of God should shine into their hearts." The God of this world—the power of the flesh—influencing all that is merely animal and material, the mind has got completely subjugated by this lower sensual life, and it

cannot see the beauty nor understand the gloriousness of that divine thing which has come forth from the bosom and intellect of God, and addresses itself to the intellect and the moral faculty of man.

That is the way the apostle explains the matter—I am not going to argue much about it myself. When men have gone through this sort of subjective experience—when they have turned away from the truth because in the perversity of their intellect they have laid down principles which they have no right to lay down—or when men are blinded with satisfaction with any system of opinions whatever, without feeling that anything can come from God which can make inquiry a duty, or worse than all, when men are sensual, vicious, worldly, and completely given up to the lusts of the flesh and of the mind—they cannot believe; and when they have rejected the gospel and gone through an experimental process like this, it is the most natural thing in the world that the gospel itself, and the preaching of the gospel too, should be considered by them to be foolishness. Of course the apostle also means to say that a different process having been gone through, ending in religious faith, there comes a very different conviction of what the gospel is. That is to say, the intellect receives the truth as a little child—and it requires a manly intellect to receive the kingdom of God as a little child. To understand the extent and proper sphere of human faculty and to know that there is a time when it is proper to adore where we cannot understand—I say there is maturity of intellect and not childishness in this. It is the highest form of manhood to understand and to manifest this. The apostle says “We receive the gospel not as the word of man but as it is in truth the Word of God.” So there must be a willingness to be led onward unto a higher life. The veil must be removed from the heart of a sinner. The love of sin must be taken away. The heart must be broken, deep repentance, contrition, prostration of soul on account of sin must be exercised, and we must receive the gospel as it is meant to be, a deliverance from sin, from its love and power.

You have instances of this. Go to Athens. A person stands and speaks to the philosophers of Athens, and the great mass of them burst out laughing. Yet the apostle is simply setting forth the truth. Aye, but there are some that do not laugh. Damaris, and Dionysius the Areopagite, one of the Council, listen and believe, and receive. The truth rises above their philosophy. When some mock at the theory of the resurrection of the dead, their hearts are opened and they receive it. Just before this at Berea you have the other illustration. The veil was upon the heart, but there was an honest desire to know whether these things were so. There was the motion of the heart—it swelled up in its living power and burst the veil, and they searched the Scriptures daily, and therefore many of them believed. In this very epistle to the Corinthians you have a similar instance. The apostle speaks of some of the Corinthians •

having been under the power of vice, steeped in sensuality. He says, "Such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Now I ask, is it not natural in this case where the intellect receives the light, and the heart is brought to contrition, penitence, rejection of sin, and is delivered from its dominion and brought altogether into a new, nobler, moral life—is it not natural for every man who has gone through such a subjective experience as that, to say, "I know that it must be a divine power which has wrought this. Men may call it foolishness or what they please when they turn their back upon it and do not give it the opportunity as it were of exerting its influence upon them, but I know what it has done in me. It is the power of God and the wisdom of God."

There is really a great deal of what men call common sense in all this, and those of you who have gone through any religious experience and know anything about the religious life, must feel that though some philosophers, so called, may look down upon you and your religious life, you care not. Don't you remember the true philosophy of that word "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, and all men, but he himself is judged of no man." That is to say, the worldly man, the sensual man, the unbelieving man, cannot properly judge and understand that subjective and spiritual experience in which a real Christian rejoices, but the spiritual man understands him, knows something of the process which has brought him there, and he understands also the blessed experience which hath made himself what he is.

Now that is the representation of the Scriptures. To them that are being saved—that are habitually influenced by the truth—it is felt to be the power of God. It has given light to the reason, repose to the intellect, tranquillity to the conscience, strength to the will, power of resistance to temptation, hatred of sin, ability to serve. Service has become not only possible, but delightful. They can look back and say, "Once I was blind, weak, prejudiced, subject to the power of evil, but now I see." Look at the apostle. The gospel was a power to him. Mark his vacillation and weakness when he is filled with a sense of degradation and cries, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death"—who shall change this weakness into power, give force to this will, and make me to follow that which I approve? He answers himself, "I thank God—Jesus Christ." And then he passes into a higher life and a better experience. "Now there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God hath done; by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin he hath condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." The gospel—the truth—the power of God in raising men up to this faculty and

ability of service and duty—the preaching of the cross—all this is foolishness to them that are perishing. They have gone through a process of mind and they are going through it more and more. It darkens the intellect and destroys the judgment. But those who have embraced and received this truth accept it as the power and wisdom of God in Christ.

Brethren I leave this brief exposition with you. How do you look at the truth? What do you look at it for? You are to look at God's truth not merely that you may have something to say about it or pass an opinion upon it, but that it may do something for you. Now I put it to you, have you studied the gospel and looked at Christ and the cross of Christ with that view? Have you come to it that it might do something for you, and not merely that you might get something to say about it? There are some people who seem to have no higher notion of religious opinions and theological questions but just that they may have something to say about them. I tell you you are not to come to the gospel with that view. You are to come with an honest desire that it may do something for you, and that will make all the difference in the way in which you estimate it.

Now brethren, has it done anything for us? Most of you profess to believe it, for the very act of worship involves a sort of belief. So is the power of God, dear fellow Christians, whose hearts are beating with love to God—it is a power in us, strengthening holy purposes, delivering us from evil habits, and assisting us with gladness to run in the ways of God's commandments, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. That is the proof of power—the demonstration of the Spirit's influence; light in the intellect becoming life in the heart, and then the life manifested in all holy duty and in resistance to all evil—the power of God to us who believe.

May God grant his blessing upon these few plain meditations, for Christ's sake.

Sketches and Essays.

HOW DO YOU BRING UP YOUR CHILDREN?

"TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO; AND WHEN HE IS OLD, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT."

The exceptions to this rule are few. Show me a dutiful and obedient child, and I shall not be wrong in coming to the conclusion that his parents are wise and judicious. On the contrary, whenever I see a self-willed, disobedient boy or girl, the probabilities are that over-indulgence and injudicious training have been the principal cause of it.

How many children are ruined by the selfish indulgence of their mothers, who, to avoid the pain or trouble of correcting or guiding a child, allow it to repeat an act of disobedience, instead of checking it at first! "Johnny, don't do that," cries a mother in a complaining tone: Johnny goes on in spite of his mother's command. He is again told to stop, in a still more angry tone, which has the effect of rousing the spirit of disobedience within him. Another threat, or an outcry of, "I never saw such a child in my life, there's no making him mind;" and Johnny has gained a victory, which he will not fail to improve the very next opportunity that may occur.

"Where is little Katie?" I asked a woman whom I sometimes called to see.

"I have sent her to bed, ma'am," said her mother, "because she would not come in from playing in the streets when I sent for her."

We may be pretty sure that Katie would come the next time she was sent for, and that she had thus learned a lesson of obedience; for which she would live to feel grateful to her mother, in having taught it to her.

I had called one day upon a respectable and industrious widow, who, having lost her husband in the prime of his life, had brought up a large family by the labour of her hands. Her eyes were red with weeping, and her countenance wore a look of the greatest misery. "What is the matter, Mrs. Parry?" I asked.

"Oh, ma'am, my boy, my Tom!" cried she, sobbing violently.

The Mother's Magazine. October, 1861.

"Is he ill? Has any accident happened to him?"

"Oh no, ma'am, would that were all! I could sooner bear to see him dead than as he now is."

By degrees, I learned the sad and oft-told tale of the spoiled child growing up into the wayward boy, and the wayward boy becoming the selfish, unsteady young man, planting thorns in the heart of that mother whom he should have loved and cherished.

"I know I spoiled him," said his mother, "but when I lost my husband, I couldn't bear to cross him in anything." And now she was reaping what she had sown; and the son of her old age, who should have cheered and smoothed his remaining parent's declining years, was wasting his health and strength in "riotous living."

"He goes to those dreadful places, ma'am, where they have music and dancing, and he comes home late, and then he isn't fit for his work in the morning; and to-day his master has turned him off for good. He took him on again twice before, when he promised to be steadier; but he didn't keep his word, and now his master will never try him again."

Another time I went to see a poor woman who was very ill. After a few moments' conversation, I inquired whether she had any relatives living, and where her husband was.

"My husband died many years back, ma'am."

"Have you no children?"

"I never had but one."

"And is it dead also?"

"No, ma'am, she is alive."

"And does she know of your illness?"

"She wouldn't care if she did," said the poor mother, bursting into tears.

"Not care?"

"No, ma'am." And by degrees I learned that this girl had been indulged and humoured by her weak mother, encouraged in her love of dress and finery, and that now, although holding a situation where she was earning good wages, she not only refused to assist her mother in any way, but had not been to see her for months, whilst living in the same town, and within half an hour's walk.

"I see it all now, ma'am, when it is too late: my girl was a very pretty child, and I was so foolish as to praise her beauty, and liked to dress her up smart, and let her have her own way in everything.

and stay away from school to go out walking with her giddy young companions; and this is the end of it all."

This one of the greatest of all earthly sorrows, "a thankless child," this most bitter cup, will be the certain consequence of setting a bad example to children or neglecting to bring them up properly. Always let a child feel that you mean what you say; avoid all hasty passionate words; "provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Most truly did Solomon say, "A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."

Blessed be God, there are parents whose hearts rise in daily gratitude to the Author and Giver of all good things, for the blessing of good and obedient children. A worthy and industrious couple, known to me, had brought up decently and respectably a family of nine children. The father was a jobbing gardener, and the mother kept a mangle. The two elder girls, eighteen and nineteen years of age, had served their time to a dressmaker, and were just beginning to earn a little for themselves, when the poor mother was suddenly seized with a dangerous complaint. "I'm sure I don't know what all those poor little ones will do with no mother to look after them," said one of the neighbours to me.

I called at the house. A neatly dressed, modest-looking young woman opened the door. I asked her if she was any relation to Mrs. Standfield, the sick woman.

"I am her eldest daughter, ma'am; I have been out at work. My sister Mary used to go with me, but since poor mother's illness we have both stayed at home. I nurse mother, who says she would rather have me than a stranger about her, and Mary looks after the little ones."

This was said so modestly, with such an entire absence of anything like parade, or seeking for praise, that I was quite pleased. I asked if I could see her mother.

"Oh, yes, ma'am, she will be so glad to see you; she was hoping you would soon come again."

Poor Mrs. Standfield's face bore the traces of great suffering, yet there was a look of happiness and deep love upon her countenance as her daughter came into the room, which could not be mistaken. She named me to her mother, and left the room. I expressed my sorrow at seeing her so ill.

"Oh! ma'am, I have much, very much to be thankful for. When I was first taken, it seemed to me as if all was dark and sad. I could not help thinking of my poor little ones, of what they would do without me. But how merciful God has been to me! My greatest trouble was about my young children; and now, I have no further care or anxiety on their account, for my daughter Mary, without a word of regret, left her work and has taken the entire care of them, and they are so happy and so quiet, that I feel they could not be better cared for if I were with them."

"You do indeed seem blessed in your children," I said; "your eldest daughter appears to be a great comfort to you."

The invalid mother's eyes filled with tears of love and gratitude. "Oh! ma'am, I could not tell you what Susan is to me: surely God will bless her and prosper her. She was to have been married, ma'am, to a respectable and steady young man, as soon as she had saved a little money at her work; but I was no sooner taken bad, than she gave up all her work, and said no one should nurse her mother but herself. She is a blessing to her parents and an example to all her brothers and sisters."

Mrs. Standfield continued long ill, and her bodily sufferings were great; yet the sunshine of domestic happiness was always beaming in that chamber of pain and weakness, and the poor mother felt that if it should please God to take her from amidst her family, her daughters would fill her place, and with filial affection carry out all her wishes. Such, with God's blessing, were the results of consistent Christian training and parental government in the way of loving obedience.

FAMILY RELIGION.

MR. B. and Mr. C. were heads of families, of about the same age, intimate friends, and members of the same church, and both prominent men in the community. They were both upright and honourable men, and, in their intercourse with the world, both stood about equally fair, and both provided equally well for the temporal wants of their families, governed them perhaps about equally well, and were alike punctual in attending public worship. But here a marked divergence between the two men commenced. Mr. B. maintained family worship with strict punctuality, counselled his children as to

their spiritual interests, taught them, from their early childhood, the right way of the Lord, and let them hear his voice in exhortation and prayer, in meetings for social worship.

But Mr. C. neglected all this. He had no family altar for the morning and evening sacrifice. He gave his children no religious instruction, took no part in, and seldom attended social religious meetings.

Now mark the contrast in the religious aspect of the two families. Mr. B. had eleven children, who lived to a mature age. Two died without having made a public profession of religion, but not without hope. Of the nine others, all became professors, and honoured their profession, and one became a successful minister of the gospel.

How was it with the children of Mr. C.? He had two sons, one died young, suddenly, by a casualty. The other was a talented, but wild youth. During a long season of severe affliction, he had some religious experiences of doubtful character, but his religious impressions left him with returning health, and he became intemperate and sceptical, and died before his father, an abandoned, inebriate, and scoffing infidel. Mr. C. had three daughters, who married and were respectable, but it is not known that one of them ever became pious.

It may be added, these two men have long since gone to their final account, and many of their children are dead, and those that remain are old and greyheaded; and while in the family of Mr. C., as far as known, religion died out with him, in the family of Mr. B., not only all the children, but many, if not all, the grandchildren became pious. Incalculable results for good or for ill may yet be developed in the families of these two men, flowing directly out from the different course which each pursued—results reaching all along the track of future time, and entering into the retributions of eternity.

Family religion and parental faithfulness are important beyond all possible estimate. This, God's providence proclaims, not only in the cases above sketched, but in numerous others, passing constantly under our own observation, if we will but observe them. Little moments go to form the days, the years, and eternity. So the daily acts of the parent go to mould and form the character and destiny of his children and posterity, for all time and eternity. It is a solemn thing to wield a parent's influence, for its results will be glorious or dreadful, and durable as eternity.

ART THOU A MOTHER?

ART thou a mother? Do thine eyes
 With transport overflow,
 To see thine olive plants arise,
 And round thy table grow?
 It is in truth a lovely sight—
 May it thy bosom fill
 With fond enjoyment and delight,
 And cheer thy dwelling still.

Art thou a mother? Ever bear
 This solemn truth in mind,—
 That thou must for their spirits care,
 Which are by nature blind.
 'Tis right to tend their mortal frames,
 And all their wants supply:
 But ah! their souls have stronger claims,
 For these shall never die.

Art thou a mother? Early teach
 Their infant lips to pray
 To him, who, 'midst their faltering speech
 Knows all they wish to say.
 Oh! bring them to the cross betimes,
 For, if the Lord's when young,
 Each life shall then be free from crimes,
 And from deceit each tongue.

Art thou a mother? Daily draw
 (As thou must still impart)
 New lessons from God's holy law,
 To purify thy heart.
 Then as they grow in sense and age,
 Thy little ones shall see
 The precepts of the sacred page
 Exemplified in thee.

Art thou a mother? Watch and fear
 To be thyself deceiv'd;
 An error once committed here
 Can never be retrieved.
 The seed that's on the billows tost
 May on some shore be thrown;
 But if a human soul be lost,
 It is for ever gone!

DR. HUIE.

MEDITATIONS ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

VI.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.—Matt. vi. 12.

THERE is a manifest fitness and propriety in all the instructions given by our Lord, both as to the doctrines themselves, and the manner in which they are communicated. He had just taught us to pray for daily bread, as an article of the first necessity; but having forfeited all our mercies by sin, we deserve nothing at the hands of God; and whatever of earthly good we may possess, while unforgiven, can yield us no real satisfaction. Hence the importance of that petition, so fitted to the lips of sinners, and of such daily necessity—"Forgive us our debts." Without divine forgiveness, wrath is mingled in our cup, and a curse with the very bread we eat. In the fulness of his sufficiency the sinner shall be in straits; every hand of the wicked shall be upon him. When he is about to fill his belly, "God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating." Nothing but pardoning mercy can sanctify our ordinary comforts, or prevent even our table from becoming a snare to us; much less can any thing short of it render us capable of enjoying future blessedness.

We are here represented as debtors, debtors to the great Father of mankind; to whom we owe a debt of obedience, of gratitude, and love, which we can never pay. We are under obligations to him for our lives, and all that we possess, and shall be so in every future stage of our existence, both in this world, and that which is to come. But God is not only our Father; he is also our Lawgiver and our Judge; and in this view we owe to him a debt of punishment, in consequence of sin, and for innumerable defects in every part of our obedience. Like the transgressor, who owes his life to public justice, for having violated the laws of his country, even so have we forfeited our all at the hands of God.

It is impossible, seriously, to reflect on what may be termed the best parts of our conduct, without feeling that we are sinners in all we do, and are continually coming short of the glory of God. He requires that we should love him with all the heart, and soul, and strength; and yet how partially is this duty fulfilled. If we love God in reality, it is nevertheless blended with awful indifference and inconstancy; and never aspires to that purity and ardour which

the transcendent excellency of the object demands, even in our happiest seasons of spiritual enjoyment; and when we closely inspect the motives by which we are influenced, how little do we discover of that sacred principle in the generality of our religious duties. We are also required, in whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God: yet how little of this enters into our worldly engagements, our common enjoyments, or even our acts of devotion. Were all our services, all our pleasures, and pursuits, measured by this rule, how little religion should we appear to possess; and how defective would every part of our conduct seem. None of the graces we exercise, none of the duties we perform, can pretend to an equality with the divine requirements; all are marked with lamentable defects, and are in deep arrears to the holy and righteous law of God.

But, when to these are added the sum of positive evil committed, who can understand his errors, or fully estimate his desert of punishment? How many sins have been committed from our youth up; sins of ignorance and presumption; how many secret departures from God, since we have known his holy name; how much ingratitude, impenitence, and unbelief; how much carnality and worldly-mindedness have entered into the composition of our character, and marred and ruined all that we have said and done.

For all this we are deeply in arrears to the divine lawgiver, have rendered ourselves unworthy of the love of "our Father who is in heaven," and justice would demand the forfeiture of all that we possess: yet we are daily adding to the dreadful score, and our sins are continually enhancing our desert of punishment. Were all the positive and negative evils of only one day written down, what shame and confusion would cover us. What then must be the total of our whole lives; in youth, in manhood, in maturer years; in health, in sickness, in fulness, in poverty, in society, in secret; against men, against God, in word, in thought, and in deed? How awful the aggravated sum! "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me."

In the view of such accumulated guilt, it is not difficult to perceive that if ever we be forgiven, it must be freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Hence all our hopes arise. Sin is a debt we can never discharge, nor can we by any means

release ourselves from an obligation to punishment. It is like a debt of long standing, that has been continually increasing, every day and hour of our lives, and which can never be liquidated, either by rivers of tears or seas of blood. Here the least and the greatest sinner stands on a level; we can make no atonement: the redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever; all our hopes and all our efforts are vain and ineffectual. Forgiveness is indeed connected with repentance, and so connected that it cannot exist without it; but they are not connected as cause and effect, so that the one must necessarily follow upon the other; for then forgiveness could not be free, even though repentance were the gift of God.

But in the forgiveness of sin, God is represented as acting with sovereign freedom, while at the same time his promises of grace ensure to the penitent the full remission of his guilt. "We have redemption through the blood of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "All that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." The creditor, who had two debtors, the one owing him five hundred pence, and the other fifty, on finding that they had nothing to pay, frankly forgave them both. Such also is the conduct of God towards us: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

In praying for divine forgiveness, it is of the utmost importance to be convinced of this necessary truth; to feel that we are deeply in debt, and have nothing to pay; and that our forgiveness must be all of grace. No other prayer will be effectual, no other plea avail. We must come as unworthy, as amongst the chief of sinners, emptied of all self-righteousness, and divested of every hope but what is founded on the promises of God in Christ Jesus.

There is however a most important consideration connected with the hope of mercy, suggested in the petition before us, which is essential to every successful application to the throne of grace. Forgiveness at the hands of God must be sought in the exercise of a forgiving spirit towards others; and it is vain to seek it in any other way. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." In the whole of this interesting prayer, our Lord had taught his disciples to feel towards each other as brethren; and now, in the

same inimitable manner, he will teach them to seek forgiveness. All the members of his family must be like himself, full of compassion, and gracious, loving one another and forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them. This only is the religion of the gospel; this only is the doctrine that is according to godliness, or that corresponds with the hope of eternal life.

Such language indeed implies that we are in danger, not only of sinning against God, but also against one another, and that therefore we shall need mutual forgiveness and forbearance; and as we forgive others, so our Father also will forgive us: after the same manner, but in an infinitely higher degree. "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt show thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward. The Lord shall reward every man according to his works."

It must needs be that offences will come; and while in this world we must expect to meet with injuries and evil treatment, not only from the wicked, but also in many cases from the righteous themselves. If men sin against God, it is no wonder they should sin against one another. The depravity of the human heart will lead to things of this sort, and no situation in life, no degree of moral excellence can secure us from them. Christ himself did not pass through the world free from investive or reproach: he had not only to endure the contradiction of sinners against himself, but the reproof of some of his brethren; and for this even the intrepid Peter was an offence to him. So certain is it, that we shall have occasion for the exercise of brotherly forgiveness, and so essential is such a disposition to the existence of the christian character that they are directly implied in the petition we are instructed to present before the throne of "our Father who is in heaven." It would be as impossible to reconcile an unforgiving spirit with the nature of true religion, as to associate with it the practice of any other evil, and the more so as it violates not only the letter of christianity, but vacates the very principles on which it is founded; giving, instead of the most perfect system of benevolence, nothing but what is hateful in malignity, and destructive of all that is fair and beautiful in the moral world.

So imperative is the duty of forgiveness on those who hope to be

forgiven, that every prayer we offer up without a disposition to perform it, is at once converted into an awful imprecation. All such prayers are an abomination to the Lord, and dangerous to the individual who shall presume to offer them. He is making his own destruction sure, while he puts on the semblance of piety and devotion. To pray and hope to be forgiven, "even as we forgive others," while we ourselves are cruel and implacable, is a doctrine only fit for devils to believe, and can find no place among real christians. It is no inconsiderable commendation of the religion of Jesus, that it requires all his followers to be as brethren, to be kind and tender-hearted, ready to forgive; and that whatever is incompatible with this should disqualify them for the kingdom of heaven. Matt. xviii. 23, 35. Luke xvii. 3, 4. Ephesians iv. 31, 32.

NEVER DESPAIR EVEN OF THE MOST HARDENED.

A LADY of great refinement and benevolence being obliged to establish her house in a village hitherto known to her only by reputation, found herself in the vicinity of a very large number of people to whom the gospel was not preached. In dependance upon God, she determined to do what she could, and therefore appointed a weekly prayer meeting to be held at her house every Sabbath evening, to which she invited all to whom she could gain access, in that destitute neighbourhood. One after another yielded to the gentle influence of her persevering kindness, and many were led to choose the service of Jehovah. The very place itself quickly confessed the blessed change. Neatness and an air of comfort usurped the place of the confusion and filthiness of those miserable dwellings; wranglings and contentions were silenced by the whisperings of peace, the ministerings of a meek and quiet spirit.

But there was one wild, young, rebellious spirit, who scoffed at religion, openly reviled and ridiculed those who embraced it, mocked at the woman-reformer, and became so completely the terror of all, that with one consent he was regarded as beyond the reach of all means of grace, as one to be let alone rather than excite his active enmity. Though the lady's friends had advised her not to speak to this much-feared creature, she could not forbear, upon accidentally meeting him in the street, to ask him to her house the next Sabbath evening. He said he would come, but boasted among his companions

that he was only going to break up the meeting. He went, but took a seat near the door, intending to leave after accomplishing his purpose. The exercises were conducted in the usual manner, no special reference being made to him. When the meeting was over, the lady approached him saying, "I am glad to see you here, I hope you will come again." He made no reply, but the next Sabbath evening, and the next, found him still in his place. Soon he expressed a wish to go to school. The lady aided him. Presently he desired larger advantages than the village school afforded; and again she proved his friend, giving him letters of recommendation, which secured his entrance into one of the public schools of our city. There his diligence and good deportment gained him the favour of all about him. But he knew that far from the scenes of his early life must he win a name, and win a noble character. He went South, engaged in trade, in course of time acquired a handsome fortune, and after many years, returned to his long remembered, long revered benefactress, a self-made man, and an humble Christian, ever ready to do good to others, though, as a boy, his heart had seemed fully set on evil. Ah! how did her heart rejoice in this new proof of God's goodness to her. And when he sought a nearer relationship to her, she felt that one who had so nobly vindicated his claim to confidence, would make her daughter a kind husband. So the wild boy became her honoured son, and even now seeks to extend the blessings he once received, by caring for the *worst boys*.

"OUR OWN COTTAGE."—A brickmaker, who said he had "hard work to live," but who found both time and money for the beer-house every night, was induced by his master to deposit a few shillings weekly in the savings' bank. The shillings soon became pounds; and at the end of about ten years, the working-man's bank-book showed a balance in his favour of £200! "Now Andrew," said the master, "you have made bricks for other folks' houses, make some for *your own*." A plot of land was soon purchased, and a neat cottage built. It was a joyous occasion when Andrew's family took their first meal in "our own cottage." Andrew has now a vote for the county of York! Are there not thousands of the working-men of our country, who, like Andrew, might live *rent free* in their own cottages if they would? —*British Workman*.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS.

THE character of most men is formed and fixed before it is apprehended that they have, or can have, any character at all. Many vainly and fatally imagine that the first few years of life may be disposed of as you please, that a little neglect may easily be repaired, that a little irregularity may easily be rectified. This is saying, in other words, "Never regard the morning; sleep it, trifle it, riot it away; a little closer application at noon will recover the loss. The spring returns, the flowers appear upon the earth, the time of the singing of birds has come. No matter; it is soon enough to think of the labours of spring. Sing with the birds, skip with the fawn, the diligence of a more advanced, more propitious season will bring everything round, and the year shall be crowned with the horn of plenty." A single ray of reason is sufficient to detect and expose such absurdity; yet human conduct exhibits it in almost universal prevalence. Infancy and childhood are vilely cast away; the morning is lost, the seed-time neglected, and what is the consequence? A life full of confusion and an old age full of regret, a day of unnecessary toil, and a night of vexation, a hurried summer, a meagre autumn, a comfortless winter.

An eminent writer of the present day has observed that, "from the hour that the child becomes capable of noticing what is passing around him, he receives impressions from example, and circumstances, and situation. So powerful indeed are the gradual and unnoticed influences of these early days, that we not unfrequently see the indulged and humoured infant a petty tyrant before a year old, at two years of age a discontented irritable thing, causing every one but its mother to turn away from it with disgust. At this period of life the child is making observations, forming opinions, and acquiring habits. Notions, right or wrong, are now becoming so completely a part of his character, that they can never be eradicated."

"I think I may say (remarks the celebrated Locke) that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. It is that which makes the great difference in mankind. The little or almost insensible impressions on our tender infancies have very important consequences. There it is as in the fountains of rivers, where a gentle

application of the hand turns the flexible waters into channels that make them take quite contrary courses ; and by this little direction given them at first in the source, they receive different tendencies, and arrive at last at very remote and distant places. Imagine the minds of children as easily turned, this way or that, as water itself."

Mothers, who can say how much depends on your instructions to your little ones? "I have long felt (observes Lord Shaftesbury) that until the fathers and mothers are better men and better women, our schools can accomplish comparatively little. I believe that any improvement that could be brought to bear on the mothers, more especially, would effect a greater amount of good than any thing that has yet been done."

MAXIMS FOR PARENTS.

"When the ground is soft and gentle, it is time to sow the seed ; when the branch is tender, we can train it easiest ; when the stream is small, we can best turn its course."

1. Begin to train your children from the cradle. From their earliest infancy inculcate the necessity of obedience, instant, unhesitating obedience. Obedience is very soon understood even by an infant. Read Prov. xxii. 6 ; Col. iii. 20 ; Eph. vi. 1—3.

2. Unite firmness with gentleness. Let your children understand that you mean exactly what you say. Gen. xviii. 19 ; 1 Sam. iii. 13 ; 1 Tim. iii. 4.

3. Never give them anything because they cry for it.

4. Seldom threaten ; and be always careful to keep your word. Prov. xix. 18 ; xxiii. 13, 14 ; Lev. xix. 3.

5. Never promise them anything, unless you are quite sure you can give them what you promise.

6. Always punish your children for wilfully disobeying you, but never punish in a passion. Be calm as a clock, yet decisive. Prov. xiv. 29 ; xvi. 32.

7. Do not be always correcting your children ; and never use violent or terrifying punishments. Take the rod (so Solomon says), let it tingle, and pray God to bless it. A little boy had been guilty of lying and stealing. His father talked with him on the greatness of his sin, told him he must punish him, represented to him the con-

sequences of sin, as far worse than his present punishment; and then chastised him. These means were made a blessing to the child, and from that time he shunned both falsehood and dishonesty. A few angry words and violent blows would have produced no such effect. Prov. xiii. 24; xxii. 15; xxix. 15; Eph. vi. 4.

8. On no account allow them to do at one time what you have forbidden, under the same circumstances, at another. Exod. xx. 12; Prov. vi. 20—22.

9. Teach them early to speak the truth on all occasions. If you allow them to shuffle and deceive in small matters, they will soon do it in greater, till all reverence for truth is lost. Prov. xii. 19, 22.

10. Be very careful what company your children keep. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Prov. xiii. 20.

11. Make your children useful as soon as they are able, and find employment for them as far as possible. Prov. x. 4; xviii. 9; xix. 15; 2 Thess. iii. 10.

12. Teach your children not to waste anything; to be clean and tidy; to sit down quietly and in good order to their meals; to take care of, and mend their clothes; to have "a place for everything, and everything in its place." 1 Cor. xiv. 40; John vi. 12.

13. Never suffer yourself to be amused by an immodest action; nor, by a smile, encourage those seeds of evil, which, unless destroyed, will bring forth the fruits of vice and misery. Eph. v. 11, 12.

14. Encourage your children to do well, show them you are pleased when they do well. Prov. i. 8, 9.

15. Teach your children to pray, by praying with and for them yourself. Maintain the worship of God in your family, if you desire His blessing to descend on you and yours. Josh. xxiv. 15; Psalm ci. 2.

16. Impress upon their minds that eternity is before them, and that those only are truly wise who secure eternal blessings. Say, "My child, what concerns you most, what I am most anxious about, is not what you are to be, or to possess here, for a little while; but what you are to be, and to have, for ever!" Deut. vi. 7; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Matt. xix. 14.

17. Above all, let parents be themselves what they would wish their children to be; for it is only by the power of the Gospel of Christ in our own hearts, that we shall be enabled to bring up our children for God.

A CONTENTED FARMER.

ONCE upon a time, Frederick, King of Prussia, surnamed "Old Fritz," took a ride, and espied an old farmer ploughing his acre by the wayside, cheerfully singing his melody.

"You must be well off, old man," said the king; "does this acre belong to you, which you so industriously labour?"

"No, sir," replied the farmer, who did not know that it was the king, "I am not so rich as that; I plough for wages."

"How much do you get a day?" asked the king.

"Eight groschen," said the farmer.

"This is not much," replied the king; "can you get along with this?"

"Get along, and have something left."

"How is that?"

The farmer smiled, and said—

"Well, if I must tell you, two groschen are for myself and wife; with two I pay my old debts; two I lend away; and two I give for the Lord's sake."

"This is a mystery which I cannot solve," replied the king.

"Then I will solve it for you," said the farmer. "I have two old parents at home, who kept me when I was weak and needed help; I keep them; this is my debt, toward which I pay two groschen a day. The third pair of groschen, which I lend away, I spend for the children, that they may receive Christian instruction; this will come handy to me and my wife when we get old. With the last two groschen I maintain two sick sisters, whom I would not be compelled to keep; this I give for the Lord's sake."

The king, well pleased with this answer, said—

"Bravely spoken, old man! Now I will give you something to guess. Have you ever seen me before?"

"Never," said the farmer.

"In less than five minutes you shall see me fifty times, and carry in your pocket fifty of my likenesses."

"This is a riddle which I cannot unravel," said the farmer.

"Then I will do it for you," replied the king.

Thrusting his hand into his pocket, and counting him fifty new gold pieces into his hand, stamped with his royal likeness, he said to the astonished farmer, "The coin is genuine, for it also comes from our Lord God, and I am his paymaster."

CHRIST IS ALL.

A SERMON

BY THE

REV. J. HAMILTON BALLARD, B.A.,

(OF ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE.)

LONDON:

JAMES PAUL, 1, CHAPTER-HOUSE COURT,

NORTH SIDE ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, AND PATERNOSTER ROW.

—
1861.

Family Preacher.

CHRIST IS ALL.

A Sermon

BY THE REV. J. HAMILTON BALLARD, B.A.

(OF ALTRINCHAM, CHESHIRE.)

“Christ is all.”—COLOSSIANS iii. 11.

HE who wrote these words was the same that said “To me to live is Christ:” and Christ, who was Paul’s life, was also the great subject of Paul’s writings. Read Paul’s epistles and you shall see that they are full of Christ; on the person and the work of Christ Paul never is weary of dwelling. And as the rest, so this epistle to the Colossians is full of Christ. Indeed the key note of the epistle may be found in the words of the text, “Christ is all.” I speak to you now on this sentence, so short, yet so profound, that perhaps no created intellect can fully sound its depths—a sentence which contains in it the concentrated essence of the gospel.

This great truth that “Christ is all”—the all-sufficient one in whom all fulness dwells—the all-powerful, all-wise, all-wealthy one—by whom all things were created, and by whom all things consist—in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—whose riches are unsearchable—“all” in creation—“all” in providence—“all” in grace—“all” in glory—this truth I shall endeavour to set before you in some of the lights in which it may be viewed. Holy Spirit! whose great prerogative it is to bring our souls to Christ and Christ into our souls, give us the *eye* of faith to see, and the *heart* of faith to receive this great and glorious truth, that each one may be enabled to say from the heart, “to me Christ is all.”

I shall ask you to look at this truth, “Christ is all,” in the following aspects:—

- I. As the Burden of the Bible.
- II. As the Christian’s joy.
- III. As the World’s scorn.
- IV. As Heaven’s glory.

I. This truth, “Christ is all,” is the Burden of the Bible—it is the golden thread that runs all through the scripture web—it is the great central truth around which the types, promises, prophecies, doctrines, precepts, planet-like revolve.

Look at the *Old Testament*—in the *promises* “Christ is all.” In the very first book of the Bible, almost at its very commencement, we find a promise which centres in Christ—the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head—and onward, through the *Old Testament*,

the promises, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to David, to the Fathers, down to the close of the Old Testament, have this for their key note, "Christ is all"—the promises are made in Christ—confirmed in Christ. (Rom. xv. 8.) Yea and Amen in Christ. (2 Cor. i. 20.) Fulfilled in Christ. (2 Sam. vii. 12; Acts xiii. 23; Luke i. 68—73.) Is not the burden of the promises "Christ is all?" In the *prophecies* (which are oft promises too) "Christ is all." The very first prophecy (one from God's own lips) speaks of Christ—the seed of the woman. And you have but to study the prophecies of the Old Testament to see that their key note is "Christ is all." It was an angel's voice which said to John in the Apocalypse (xix. 10.) "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Oh! how all the rays of prophecy centre in the Sun of Righteousness—from Genesis to Malachi—"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy!" To the *person* of Christ how much of the prophecies are devoted—as the seed of the woman—the seed of Abraham—the seed of Isaac—the seed of David—Jehovah's Fellow—Emanuel, God with us. And then his wondrous birth—"a *virgin* shall conceive"—even the place of his birth—"and thou Bethlehem." To the *character* of Christ how wondrous the teaching of prophecy! His meekness, and gentleness, and tenderness "a bruised reed will be not break," "he was led as a lamb." His zeal—"the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." (Psalm lxix. 8.) To the *work* of Christ how wondrous the testimony of prophecy! Those holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, could pierce the veil that hides the future from men's eyes, and by centuries of anticipation could speak with wondrous accuracy of that God-man's work—of Christ's life and death. They wrote of his anointing by the Holy Ghost—they wrote of his entrance on his public ministry—the place where that ministry was to commence—Galilee (Isaiah ix.) They wrote of his wondrous miracles—his teaching by parables—his rejection by the Jews—his betrayal for thirty pieces of silver—his sufferings and death. The 22nd Psalm and 53rd of Isaiah are as mirrors where these are seen reflected with all the minuteness and accuracy of reality. The latter chapter was the means of the conversion of Lord Rochester, that "great wit, great sinner, and great penitent," for there he saw the God-man and his great atonement described minutely and accurately centuries before the events there spoken of took place. They wrote, too, of his burial in the rich man's tomb—his resurrection, when he robbed the grave of victory, and took the sting from death—his ascension, when he led captivity captive and received gifts for men. They wrote of his future glory, when all kings shall fall down before him, all nations do him service, when he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth, and shall reign for ever and ever. Is not, then, the burden of the prophecies, "Christ is all?"

In the *types* of the Old Testament, "Christ is all."

They are but shadows of the great substance, Christ—they are but pictures of the great original Christ; whether they be ritual types, or

typical men, or typical events, or typical places, or typical things, the burden of them is "Christ is all." "Christ, in his grace and work, is the golden key to open every part." It has been well said of that great book of types—Leviticus "Leviticus is calvary foreshown—Calvary is Leviticus unfolded." "The one casts forward the morning ray, the other pours down the midday blaze. But the early and the brighter beams stream from one Sun—Christ Jesus." And the same may be said of the Old Testament generally. The types, how wonderful! how interesting! "It pleased God," says one, "to treat his Church, in the primitive economy, as we treat our offspring in their early days. He placed the infant Church under an infant system of education, and taught her more through the eye than the ear. He surrounded her with emblems and symbols—the material but majestic language of an initiatory and imperfect dispensation. At the same time these emblems and symbols were fraught with glorious import, big with the unsearchable riches of grace. And now that we look back upon them from the vantage ground of evangelic elevation, what an exhaustless treasury of divine wisdom, and what an exuberant storehouse of magnificent illustration do we find in those memorials of the past! How beautifully, for instance, does the epistle to the Hebrews unlock the glorious prefigurations contained in what, but for such development, might have been deemed the cumbrous, unmeaning ritual and ceremonial of the ancient Jews. But laid open and enunciated by that epistle, all is befitting, significant and grand. Now, the high priest with his vestments, his mitre, his breastplate—now the divers washings, and the sundry purifications, and the ever-recurring and interchanging offerings; now, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering, and the offering of incense; now, the offering of the first green ears, and the wave-offering, and the heave offering—all these are seen to have been images and adumbrations of the glorious realities of the gospel—foreshadowing all the noblest hopes and most blessed consolations of the people of God." This testimony is true. 'The types, whether they be typical men, as Adam and David; or typical rites, as the Passover; or typical things, as Jacob's ladder and the brazen serpent; or typical places, as the cities of refuge; or typical events, as the deluge; the types have one voice, and that is "Christ is all." Yes, the burden of the Old Testament is this great truth, "Christ is all." And there was wondrous wisdom as well as truth in that remark of a poor and plain, but heaven-taught man, "to my thinking, the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." "Flesh and blood had not taught it to him, but his Father in heaven."

Look at the *New Testament* and mark how all its writings continue to utter the one great truth, "Christ is all." Take the four Gospels—why they are all about Christ—the birth of Christ—the character of Christ—the works of Christ—the words of Christ—the sufferings of Christ—the death of Christ—the burial, resurrection, ascension of Christ—they are full of Christ from beginning to end.

Then the book of the Acts—what is that but an account of the preaching of Christ and him crucified—the record of the triumphs of Christ over high sinners and low sinners—learned sinners—ignorant sinners—young sinners—old sinners—little sinners—great sinners! Then look at the epistles. Look at Paul's epistles, they are full of Christ—his person and his work. Yea, it is in one of Paul's epistles that the wondrous sentence occurs, "Christ is all and in all." Look at Peter's epistles, and John's; is Peter ever weary of dwelling on the master whom he denied, but to whom he could afterwards say (with grief, that the question should be so often repeated) "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." And how perpetually and sweetly does John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, dwell on the love of him on whose breast he leaned! And then the closing book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, that wondrous, that glorious, that sublime book, how full of Christ! In the very first verse it is called the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and throughout it we have continually brought before us, the glory, the majesty, the power, the love, the justice of Christ, and almost its closing sentence is the prayer, "Even so come, Lord Jesus." Thus my friends, from Genesis to Revelation, the Bible has one voice, "Christ is all." This truth is the burden of the Old and New Testament. Almost the very opening page of the Bible contains the promise of Christ's first coming, and its glorious results; the very last page of the Bible breathes a prayer for Christ's second coming. "Christ is all," this is the burden of the Bible.

II. "Christ is all," is the Christian's joy.

What is a Christian? Is it a person who is not a heathen, or a Mahomedan, or a Socinian, or an Infidel? Ah, no! you may be none of these, and yet not be a Christian. What is a Christian? Is it one who has been baptized, attends some place of worship, lives a respectable and moral life? Oh, no! to be a Christian is to be something more than this. A Christian is a person who is "in Christ," part of Christ! united to Christ by faith, a member of Christ's body, of his flesh and his bones, and thus trusts in Christ, loves Christ, one in whom Christ's love begets love in return, one who can say, "My beloved is mine and I am his." In a word, a Christian is one who has faith in Christ, love to Christ, hope through Christ, one who can say, "Christ is mine." If, then, this be a true definition of a Christian, this truth, "Christ is all," is the Christian's joy. For consider. He can say, "Christ is all, and Christ is mine." What joy like this! Money may confer a certain amount of joy such as it is, but it is only for a time. We brought nothing with us into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out of it. Uncertain, fading joy this! Earthly pleasures may give joy, but too often 'tis the joy that ends in eternal sorrow, a spark for a moment, then the blackness of darkness for ever! At the best, of itself it cannot satisfy the soul, "whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again;" it cannot quench the thirst of an immortal spirit. But the Christian (the true Christian, not the nominal Christian, the

professing Christian, who has no love for Christ in his heart,) the Christian has a joy as far surpassing that of the world as heaven exceeds earth, a joy unfading, permanent. "If any drink," says Christ, "of the water that I shall give him, he shall never thirst." Look at the Christian. He can say "Christ is all, and Christ is mine." What can the Christian lose? He may lose his money. Very well, but still Christ, whose riches are unsearchable, is his, Christ is all wealth, and Christ is his. What can the Christian lose? He may lose his relatives and friends, but still Christ who is the friend above all others, the friend that sticketh closer than a brother, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, Christ who is all friendship and love, Christ is his. What can the Christian lose? His health. His head may ache, his frame be pained, and weary, and tottering, but Christ is all health, and Christ is his, and will soon bring him to his own land, where the "inhabitant shall no more say I am sick," where there shall be no more pain, for the former things are passed away. What can the Christian lose? He may lose his life. Death may come, but it is only as Christ's messenger to sever the bonds that chain down the undying spirit to its prison of clay, and let it soar to bliss and glory everlasting. Christ is all, and Christ is his, and in Christ he has a life, a glorious happy life beyond the grave, a life beyond life, embalmed for eternity. Oh what an unfailing source of joy to the Christian is this truth, "Christ is all"—joy amid poverty, joy amid separations from relatives and friends, joy amid sickness and pain, joy in death, joy at the judgment seat, joy in eternity. Oh Christian! why art thou cast down, thou hast a right to joy, "Christ is all and Christ is thine."

"Why should'st thou fear the darkest hour,
Or tremble at the tempter's power,
Jesus vouchsafes to be thy tower,
Though hot the fight, why quit the field?
Why should'st thou either flee or yield,
Since Jesus is thy mighty shield.

Thou know'st not what may soon betide,
Or how thy wants shall be supplied;
But Jesus knows, and will provide.
Though sin would fill thee with distress,
The throne of grace thou canst address,
For Jesus is thy righteousness.

Though faint thy prayers, and cold thy love,
Thy steadfast hope should not remove,
While Jesus intercedes above.
Against thee, earth and hell combine,
But on thy side is power divine,
Jesus is all, and he is thine."

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."

III. "Christ is all"—this is the world's scorn.

By the world I mean the whole mass of unconverted people, the whole mass of those who have not risen from the death of sin to the life of righteousness in Christ. I say, then, that this truth, "Christ is all," is the world's scorn. As for the heathen, the

Mahommedan, the Jew, the Infidel, of course "Christ is all" is their open scorn, there is no mistake about that. "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks, the representatives of Gentile unbelief, foolishness." But the moral, respectable man, who is yet only nominally a Christian, whose ruling principle is not the love of God, his Saviour, I say that this truth, "Christ is all," is *his* scorn too. Why? His practice shews it. He is not living as if he had the slightest idea that "Christ is all." Christ all! indeed, to such an one pleasure is all, or money is all, or self is all. "Pleasure, profit and honour," says Baxter, "is the carnal man's Trinity, and his carnal self is these in Unity." Ah, yes, "Christ is all," is the world's scorn. They don't understand it, they don't appreciate it, they don't love it, they scorn it, if not in profession, by practice, if not in word, by deed, *they live as if it were a lie*. Said Christ to his own, on the eve of his death, "If the world hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you." Saith the beloved John, to whom Christ was all, "the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." "He was in the world and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Yes, "Christ is all," which is the Christian's joy is the world's scorn; worldlings have no eye of faith to see Christ's glory, no ear of faith to hear Christ's voice, no heart of faith to feel the deep deep need of Christ, and to receive in all its fulness, its saving power, the great truth, "Christ is all."

IV. "Christ is all," is Heaven's glory.

Man has been given a glimpse of heaven. The veil has been drawn aside by the hand of Christ. And his servant John has delivered to us an account of what he saw when an exile "in the isle called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ;" when the lonely and despised one learned what was hidden from the great, the powerful and the wise of this world. This account is contained in the closing book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, and I need scarcely tell you that begins with Christ, is full of Christ, ends with Christ. And here is what John saw, "I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain . . . and the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb . . . and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, &c. . . . And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Can you read this and not

see "Christ is all" to be heaven's glory? The Lamb is he to whom the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, hymn their eternal praises as they strike their ever-tuned and golden harps in celestial harmony. It is from the wrath of the Lamb that men shall flee, calling on the rocks to fall on them. It is the Lamb that shall feed his own and lead them to fountains of living water, and it is the Lamb that the 144,000 who are said to stand with him in mount Zion, the glorious, spotless happy 144,000, it is the Lamb that they follow whithersoever he goeth, and it is the song of the Lamb that rises in sublime and glorious strains from the harpers standing on the sea of glass. And the victor over great Babylon and her hosts is no other than the Lamb. He shall overcome them, for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. And the blessed, the divine marriage supper at which the redeemed in glory shall sit down with joy unspeakable, is the marriage supper of the Lamb; the glorious bride, the new Jerusalem, is the Lamb's wife. "I saw no temple therein for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, the Lamb is the light thereof;" the Book of life is the Lamb's Book, the throne is the throne of God and of the Lamb, from which the pure river of the water of life proceeds. Yes, "Christ is all," this is Heaven's glory.

And now I close.

1. My brother, my sister: If this great and glorious truth be the burden of the Bible—the great central truth of the Old and New Testaments—hast thou seen it to be so? Hast thou searched the Bible, the Old as well as the New Testament, to find Christ? Hast thou seen Christ in the promises? Christ in the types? Christ in the prophecies? Christ from Genesis to Revelation? If not, thou hast not read the Bible aright, thou hast seen but little of its glory, for its chief glory is that in it "Christ is all."

2. If the truth, "Christ is all," be the Christian's joy, is it thine? In trial, in temptation, in poverty, in sickness, dost thou know what it is to look up and say, "Christ is mine, and Christ is all;" my joy, no man, no devil, taketh from me.

3. If this truth is the world's scorn, if the principle on which the unconverted act is not "Christ is all," but "money, or pleasure, or self is all;" ask thyself, is it my scorn? Am I acting as if the apostle's statement, "Christ is all," were a lie?

4. If this truth be Heaven's glory, where the throne, the songs, the glory, are the Lamb's, how could you be happy there if "Christ is all" is not your glory here?

Lastly, "Is Christ thine all," all thy trust, all thy life, all thy hope, for time and for eternity? If not, wilt thou decide this day to make Christ thine all, to give thyself to him having taken him to be thine. To-morrow may be too late. Remember! there is one place where it will be unspeakable and everlasting bliss to think that "Christ is all;" that place is HEAVEN. There is another place where it will be an aggravation of woe to think "Christ is all," *but not for me*, who rejected him, that place is HELL!

Sketches and Essays.

PARENTAL PARTIALITY.

“And Isaac loved Esau—but Rebekah loved Jacob.”—Gen. xxv. 28.

THESE graphic strokes of the pen of inspiration lay open to us an interior view of a patriarchal family, as that family existed between thirty and forty centuries ago. Since, however, human nature is, in all material points, alike, in all ages, it is no matter of wonder, that in the view thus discovered to us, we perceive much, which, even in our own days, is familiar to our observation. Parental affection glowed warm and bright in the breasts of Isaac and Rebekah; but, like too many parents of the present time, the patriarch and “the woman whom the Lord” had “appointed” to his wife, suffered selfish interest, or capricious fancy, to reign in matters which ought to have been determined by sober judgment and impartial affection.

It is not difficult to imagine the reason why Esau, a hunter and a warrior,—a man who probably excelled in all manly exercises, and who seems to have been ready to exert himself in any way which might tend to the gratification of his father, should be loved by Isaac; who, blind and advanced in years, must have been dependant for his daily comforts upon the kindness of those who surrounded him, and especially upon the reverent and grateful attachment of his first-born son. Neither is it surprising, that Rebekah should fondly love her younger son, the peaceful “dweller in tents,” who was her more constant associate, and the heir of promise. The sin of both parents consisted not in the ardour of the affection which either of them felt for *one* child; but in the indulging of that affection to the prejudice and injury of *the other*, who ought to have been equally dear to them. In the family disunion which ensued, and in the characters of the brothers thus equally loved, the disastrous consequences of the unjust and partial fondness of Isaac and Rebekah, soon became apparent. The whole narrative, — unrivalled in its graphic simplicity, — strikingly illustrates the mighty energy of parental, and particularly of maternal influence, in moulding and forming the characters of children; and *that*, especially, when the influence is indirectly and un-

The Mother's Magazine. November, 1861.

intentionally exerted. It is as exhibiting the effects of this indirect and unintentional influence, that the domestic history of this ancient family is peculiarly pre-eminently worthy of our regard. Most mothers have some idea of the efficacy of parental influence, when that powerful influence is directly and intentionally exerted, and are, consequently, in some measure, upon their guard, lest so vast a power should be injuriously applied; but very few indeed are equally aware of the much greater efficacy of that incidental and undesigned influence, which, whether for good or evil, they are continually exerting throughout the whole of their intercourse with their children. When Rebekah indulged her partiality for her younger son, she had no intention beyond her own gratification and his supposed advantage; yet her conduct, by its incidental and undesigned operation, influenced most injuriously the characters of Esau and Jacob, and affected in a material degree, the destinies of their progeny in distant generations. The twin brothers, bound together, as they should have been, in the closest bonds of affection, speedily became effectually alienated from each other: the elder envies and hates him who ought to have been to him an object of the most tender affection, and even becomes, in heart, his murderer: the younger, in order to avoid his brother's fury, becomes a fugitive from his home and his country: and the estrangement thus occasioned between the twin sons of Rebekah, is perpetuated, notwithstanding some temporary and partial reconciliations, among the children of Edom and Israel, even to their most remote posterity.

From the simple expression, "and the boys grew," used in describing the domestic scenes which are revealed to us in the inspired history of the family of Isaac, we may gather, that the unjust partiality of the parents was not only manifested on a few special occasions, but was in truth, a settled habit of long continuance. The injurious principle had been in exercise even from the childhood of the twin brothers, and had imperceptibly done its work upon the characters of both. Envy, jealousy, and hatred took root in both their bosoms: Jacob became a supplanter in conduct, as well as in name; and Esau determined in his heart, to "slay" his brother. It is true, indeed, that partiality shewn by parents, does not always produce consequences so direful; but its tendency is ever the same. It tends, in all cases, to produce envy and jealousy between children: it sows the seeds of hateful passions, although the full harvest which may

be expected from those seeds, may sometimes, by the mercy of God, be prevented from ripening. Its mischievous effects are also apparent in the weakening of parental authority, and in the destruction of that respect with which it is desirable that children should regard the character and conduct of their parents. Children have a more accurate and upright judgment than is sometimes supposed : and the child who perceives and *envies* the partial favour shewn to his brother, sees and *despises* the same unjust partiality, even while he is himself the object of it, and the temporary gainer by it. Children very early learn to appreciate rightly the value of equal justice in the daily treatment which they receive from their parents ; and the mother who permits herself to shew undeserved and unequal favour loses the respect even of the child whom she injures by her partiality.

We speak especially of maternal partiality, because a mother who spends as much time as she ought to spend in the society of her children, especially during their infancy and childhood, has not only a paramount influence over them, but may, even in consequence of her intimate knowledge of their characters, be peculiarly exposed to the danger of feeling, and consequently of shewing, injudicious or unjust partiality. There is, generally, a vast variety in the characters even of children of the same family ; and it is impossible, that a mother should not perceive those differences of mental constitution or temperament, which render some more attractive than others : her perception of such differences, however, far from leading her to justify to herself the indulgence or the manifestation of partiality, ought rather to have the effect of rendering her more watchful against the slightest approaches of that insidious evil. "Children," to use the words of a female writer, "are so far conscious of their rights, as to feel that they have an *equal* claim to the parent's tenderness and affection. Where this claim is not allowed, and capricious fondness singles out some particular objects on which to lavish its regards, it never fails to produce the worst consequences both on the favoured and neglected parties. In the former, it engenders pride and arrogance ; in the latter, it brings forth indignation and hatred ; and it destroys the sense of justice in both. It too often happens, that personal defects, or personal charms, occasion this unfortunate bias in a mother's mind. Sometimes, that briskness which is so frequently mistaken for genius, or that slowness which is confounded with

stupidity, becomes an excuse for partiality or dislike ; and sometimes no excuse is attempted, but the senseless one, that " it is a feeling which cannot be helped."

" Whatever may be the motive assigned for partiality to a favourite, or for a dislike to an unfavoured child, the mother who indulges her feelings with regard to either, may be assured, that she is guilty of a crime of no light dye. She breaks the bonds of family affection, and she sows the seeds of discord among her children, which seeds, are sure to produce envy, jealousy, and a perpetual recurrence of strife." These observations, certainly, form a good comment on the words of the inspired historian, " Isaac loved Esau ; but Rebekah loved Jacob." Let every mother, if she would avoid for herself and the children whose happiness is, in a great measure, dependant upon her, the miseries of family disunion and discord, and other evils even more deplorable, strictly guard, in her daily conduct, against the indulgence of unreasonable and unjust partiality ; and against the manifestation of any preference of one child before another, in such a way as to excite envious or jealous feelings. " Love," says Richard Cecil, " is the grand engine of a mother."

" A mother's love ! how sweet the name !
What is a mother's love ?
The noblest, purest, tenderest flame,
That kindles from above,
Within a heart of earthly mould ;
As much of heaven as heart can hold,
Nor through eternity grows cold ;
This is a mother's love !

That this " great engine " should be efficiently applied is incalculably important ; and nothing will more certainly diminish its efficacy, than the perception, on the part of the children of a family, that the priceless blessing of their mother's love is capriciously and partially divided among those who are equally entitled to it, and who need and value it alike.

LOVE REIGNING.

BY ADOLPHE MONOD.

It is by feeling oneself loved that one learns to love ; and selfishness reigns only because we are ignorant of the love of God. " He who loveth not, knoweth not God." You will love as you have been loved ; you will love God because God has first loved you ; you will love your neighbour because God has loved both him and you. Have

you a glimpse of the new life that this change purposes for you? I see you a follower of God, a dear child, henceforth living only to diffuse around you the love wherewith God has filled your heart. I see you according to the example of Christ, who hath loved you, "going about doing good," and finding your enjoyment in privations in fatigues, in sacrifices of charity. I see you, "constrained by the love of Christ," separated from your own selfish inclination, from the love of money, and of the empty pleasures of the world, consoling the afflicted, comforting the poor, visiting the sick, and carrying with you everywhere Jesus Christ and his benefits. Then the image and likeness of God will be formed anew in your heart!—then you will "dwell in God, and God in you." If to be loved is the life of the soul, to love is it not its enjoyment? If to be loved constitutes all the doctrine of the Gospel, to love is all its moral. To love as we have been loved is heaven upon earth. Happy are you if the love of God so penetrate you that no description of your character, viewed on whatever side it may be, can be more correct than that definition with which this love has inspired St. John for a description of God! Happy if it may be said of you, he is love! his words are love! his works are love! his zeal is love! his labour is love! his joys are love! his tears are love! his reproofs are love! his judgment is love! Happy, above all, if that God, who searcheth the hearts and reins, can add, his heart also is love!

THE POWER OF KIND WORDS.

"KIND WORDS do not cost much. They never blister the tongue or lips. And we have never heard of any mental trouble arising from this quarter. Though they do not cost much, yet they accomplish much. They help one's good nature and good will. Soft words soften our own soul. Angry words are fuel to the flames of wrath and make it blaze the more fiercely. Kind words make other people good natured. Cold words freeze people, and hot words scorch them, and bitter words make them bitter, and wrathful words make them wrathful. There is such a rush of all other kinds of words in our days, that it seems desirable to give kind words a chance among them. There are vain words, and spiteful words, and silly words, and boisterous words, and war-like words. Kind words, also, produce their own image on men's souls. And a beautiful image it is,

they soothe, and quiet, and comfort the heart. "They shame us of sour, morose, feelings."

When these suggestions, printed on a slip of paper, accidentally came in my way,—Yes, said I to myself, though I know not the author of them, these are true words about kind words, and they cannot be too widely circulated. I have known *three words only*, spoken in a *kind tone*, become the means at once of saving a life, and of "saving a soul from death." In a small country town in the south of England, there was a woman, whose violent temper and tongue, in addition to her ill conduct, had so outraged and disgusted all her neighbourhood, that at length nobody would speak to her. Without comfort or resources within, and thus cut off from all society, she became so miserable, that she determined to put an end to her life, by throwing herself into a deep part of the river that skirted the town. As she was going along the bank to do her purpose, a Christian minister who was returning from his morning walk, and who knew her only by sight, said to her, in a kind tone, "Good morning, Mary." Those *three words*, kindly uttered, changed her purpose. She said within herself, (as she afterwards told him,)—"There is then *one* who will speak kindly to me: I will go home and mend my ways." She became a dilligent attendant on the instructions of that minister, and a thoroughly altered woman.

And among the many pleasant recollections of Him who "spake as never man spake," are not His *kind words* patterns for "all who profess and call themselves Christians." Though we cannot hear the tone, we can feel of what spirit it must have been, when He said—"Daughter, be of good comfort: Daughter, go in peace: She hath done what she could: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me:"—and when He spoke weeping at the grave of Lazarus:—and when He prayed for His murderers,—"Father, forgive." And we can discern also how the same spirit passed into the soul of the rigid persecutor Saul, and made him the benevolent Paul, overflowing with kindness and delighting to describe what Christian love is, (1 Cor. xiii.)—and into the gentle heart of the apostle John, refining whatever in him had been by nature affectionate, into the divinely grateful temper of "the new commandment," and inspiring him to say to us—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins: Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."—1 John iv. 10, 11.

SAMUEL BUDGETT, THE SUCCESSFUL MERCHANT.

NEXT to the qualities with which a man is born, the influences which his parents and his family exert are powerful in shaping his after-course. Mothers! your task in training your sons is often heavy, but your encouragements are great. How many of the good and the successful, of the wise and the happy, trace all that was bright in their character to influences lying as far back as their mother's knee!" The above remarks are extracted from the biography of the late Samuel Budgett, of Bristol, by the Rev. Wm. Arthur. Speaking of Mr. B., Mr. Arthur continues:—Happily for him, truth and grace were valued in the home of his childhood. If his parents had not been remarkably successful in gaining this world's good, they had secured the part that was of far greater price to both them and their children. He was early taught to worship, obey, and seek the God from whose hand his young being had come. What Lamartine so beautifully says of his own mother, might be said equally of his:—"We could not remember the day when she first spoke to us about God." His mother especially, was eminently pious, and her influence on the character of her son was powerful and happy. His faithful friend, the Rev. Joseph Wood, who intimately knew his inner life, thus states one of those events which pass silently within the bosom of Christian families, but which re-appear in the life of their members in blessed and memorable fruit:—"He was about nine years of age, when one day, in passing his mother's door, he heard her engaged in earnest prayer for her family, and for himself by name. He thought, my mother is more earnest that I should be saved than I am for my own salvation. In that hour he became decided to serve God, and the impression then made was never effaced." Happy that son whose heart is daily moved towards the ways of God by a mother's holy walk, and whose salvation is the daily burthen of a mother's fervent prayer! And happy that mother whose son does not steel his heart against her solicitude. "It was early," many a mother would, perhaps, think, "to be concerned for the conversion of a good, well-conducted boy, when he was only nine." Perhaps, had you been much concerned for the conversion of your boy when he was good and well-conducted, he might have been good and well-conducted still. "It is early," many a son will probably think, "to be anxious about a future life when I am yet so young." Perhaps, if you defer now because it is too early, you will, in a few years, abandon the thought altogether, because it is too late."

ROBERT AND ALEXANDER HALDANE.

THE following extracts from the "Memoirs of Robert and Alexander Haldane," strikingly exhibit the value of a pious mother's prayers and example:—

"My mother's instructions," says her youngest son, in a memorandum found amongst his papers, "were so far useful, that even when she was not present I made a conscience of prayer. What she said concerning sin and punishment, also produced a considerable impression on my mind. I was desirous of avoiding sin, yet frequently committed those sins to which children are particularly exposed. I well knew that this was wrong, and having been told that infants would go to heaven, I regretted that I had not died before I had sense to discern what was wrong."

He proceeds:—"My mother died when I was very young—I believe under six; yet I am convinced that the early impression made on my mind by her care was never entirely effaced; and to this, as an eminent means in the hand of God, I impute any serious thoughts, which in the midst of my folly would sometimes intrude upon my mind, as well as that still small voice, which afterwards led me to see that all below was vanity, without an interest in that inheritance which can never fade away." He adds:—"I mention this more particularly, because it may lead Christian parents to sow in hope the seed of Divine truth in the minds of their children, and may prevent their considering their efforts unavailing, even where the things which they have taught seem to have been uttered in vain. *No means of grace is, I apprehend, more—perhaps, none is so much countenanced of God, as early religious instruction.*"

The instructions of this devoted mother were not weakened or counteracted, as often happens, by apparent inconsistency. Her life was a life of practical godliness, and of cheerful trust in the Saviour. Often, when she had seen her children in bed, and supposed that they were asleep, she was overheard by them on her knees by their bedside, earnestly praying that the Lord would be pleased to guide them through that world, which she felt that she was herself soon to leave; that their lives might be devoted to His service upon earth; and, finally, that they might be brought to His everlasting kingdom.

She died of an attack of illness commencing with a cold. Her

medical attendant, Dr. Willson, although himself an avowed unbeliever, emphatically declared that such a death-bed was enough to make one in love with death. Shortly before she died, she was asked if she would like once more to see her children, but she declined, saying, that it would only agitate her; that she had been enabled implicitly to surrender them into the hands of God, and she would rather leave them there. Her faith was strong, not only for herself, but for them; and that faith was not disappointed.

For a long time after their mother's death, both the brothers were much solemnized by a sense of the importance of those things which she had so earnestly inculcated; but whatever appearances of seriousness continued for some years, they were not enduring, which he discovered by several extracts from the manuscript already quoted. "Till I was twelve years old," the writer says, "I continued to pray, go to church, and read my Bible on the Sabbath, but it was only from a principle of duty. I was well pleased if anything occurred which seemed a sufficient excuse to myself for staying at home on the Lord's day. Sometimes I had serious thoughts and pleasure in prayer: this always puffed me up. . . . but to show how much I considered prayer a task, if I had bowed my knee in such a frame as this before supper, I considered it unnecessary to pray again when I went to bed. . . . From about thirteen to sixteen I became more careless, often spending my Sabbath evenings in idle conversation, and I was pleased to find my conscience less and less scrupulous. I began also to swear; and except a form of prayer, which I still kept up, every serious idea seemed to have fled."

Are we then to suppose that the instructions of his sainted mother had not fallen like the good seed into good ground? Had her prayers been offered in vain? And the confidence of that faith, which burned so bright in the hour of her departure, been, on behalf of her children, a vain trust in the promises of the Gospel? Had she miscalculated the meaning of those declarations made on behalf of the offspring of believing, prayerful, and persevering parents? It will be seen that the blossoms of early piety had nearly dissappeared,—that they had proved like the early cloud and the morning dew. But yet the faithful labours of the trustful mother had not been in vain. Her prayers had ascended before the mercy-seat, "perfumed with much incense," and were registered in heaven. The good seed was only buried, not lost; and, by-and-by, after a long winter, it

was destined to spring up in "the power of endless life," instinct with blessings for her children, and her children's children; nay, for thousands who were to receive the Gospel from their voice, or from their writings.

ON THE BIRTH OF A CHILD.

THE late excellent Henry Venn, in a letter written to a relative on the birth of his first child, thus writes:—

"I write now to congratulate you on the birth of your child. A Christian will receive it as a charge of inestimable worth; and, at the same time, as a patient, whose innate depravity must be guarded against, and its cure begun even from infancy. The child is, at first, little more than an animal; afterwards in a small degree, rational; and for some years, in general, is capable of being treated as spiritual. Wisdom, love, and mercy call upon us to begin *very early* with our offspring, to oppose and subdue self-will—the plague of man, and the enemy of God! And early and steadfastly opposed, it is, in most cases, very soon conquered, though not extirpated.

"No object is more pleasing than a meek obedient child. It reflects honour upon its parents, for their wise management. It enjoys much ease and pleasure to the utmost limit of what is fit. It promises excellency and usefulness—to be, when age has matured the human understanding, a willing subject in all things to the will of God. No object, on the contrary, is more shocking than a child under no management! We pity poor orphans, who have neither father nor mother to care for them. A child indulged is more to be pitied; it has no parent; it is its own master—peevish, froward, headstrong, blind;—born to a double portion of trouble and sorrow above what fallen man is heir to;—not only miserable itself, but worthless, and a plague to all that in future will be connected with it. What bad sons, husbands, masters, fathers, daughters, wives, and mothers, are the offspring of fond indulgence shown to little masters and misses, almost from the cradle! Wise discipline gives thought and firmness to the mind; and makes us useful here, and fit for a world of perfect subordination above."

Read GEN. xviii. 19; LEV. xix. 3; JOSH. xxiv. 15; 1 SAM. iii. 13; EPH. vi. 1—4; PROV. xiii. 24; xix. 18; xxii. 6, 15; xxiii. 13, 14; 1 TIM. iii. 4.

ALICE RAYMOND'S SECURITY.

BY MRS. E. JUDSON.

LONG sat the young mother musingly; and thus her passing thoughts were fashioned:—

“Yes, I have a little greenhouse, it is true,—a dear, precious depository of exquisite blossoms, whose sunshine is my smile, whose refreshing dew my love, and over whose present beauty and future development a soiled finger, nay even the breath that parts my lips as I bend above them, has strange power. The blossoms are not really mine; they are lent me by a Friend dearer to me than my very life; to whom, indeed, I owe that life, and a million other benefits. They are lent to me; and in a few years will be reclaimed. In the meantime, what shall I do for my blossoms, and to please my Benefactor? Shall I follow the example of my cousin Esther, and labour day and night to add conservatory to conservatory for their sakes, or to accumulate mountains of rich mould in which to crush and smother them? Oh, no; while bustling at these vain things, my tender little blossoms would miss my eye, and droop for lack of their accustomed sunshine.

“I have seen some sister florists, by way of gratifying a glad, strong feeling at heart, besmear the simple little plants with gaudy colours; and really the pretty things so painted made a beautiful, brave show. But I am very cowardly about my blossoms. I have a thousand flutterings and doubts, and inexplicable misgivings, and it has been somewhere whispered to me that there is a poison in those fine colours which the delicate plant cannot fail to imbibe!

“Then there is Annie Deans, with her three graceful rose-trees. Nothing will satisfy her lively fancy but to trick out the boughs with gay ribands and threads of silver, and bits of gilded stuffs, all arranged in bows and loops, and stars and streamers, and then calling on every passer-by to admire her handicraft. This may do for Annie Dean's roses, though I think even they would be more beautiful without; but my blossoms are less queenly, and their slender stems would scarcely bear such decorations. Besides, when the Owner comes, I well know He will strip the whole away; and then, if He should find a stem distorted, or a leaf mildewed, or a worm hidden under my tawdry adornments, what matter of sorrow will it be to me! And what, if by some such poor contrivances I should ruin one of these fair blossoms, so that it must be ‘cast out as a branch that is withered?’

"Then, what am I to do? I am ignorant, and weak, and foolish. Turn I this way, I err from neglect; that way, from over-culture. Scarcely two florists are of the same opinion; and if they were, each of my tender, priceless blossoms, has some peculiarity for which there can be no rule. It is a solemn, sacred thing, this charge of mine and my very soul grows tremulous with awe as I think upon it. How watchful should be my eye! How gentle my touch! How faithful my pruning! I will not grasp at vanities, and so soil my hands; I will not mingle my voice with the loud tones of the world, and so bear the seeds of its scorching fever in my breath; I will never cheat my blossoms of the sunshine and the balmy dew, while I have lips to smile or heart to love; but what SECURITY have I against so fatal a mistake that may mar their loveliness for ever, and shut them out of the celestial gardens?"

And so Alice Raymond mused on and on, till at length the cloud was lifted, and a look of serene, elevated confidence irradiated her face. Then softly she glided to her knees, and raised her white forehead with a new-born trust to the Owner of her blossoms. She had found the SECURITY!

ON THE PROSPECT OF LOSING AN ONLY CHILD.

Jesus, if thou dost ask my child, I would not say thee nay;
 And oh! may I be reconciled to feel as well as say,
 With my whole heart, "Thy will be done."
 Though thou shouldst take my only one.

It is no trifling sacrifice which thou dost ask of me,
 Unless thy grace the strength supplies I cannot give it thee;
 But strong in that imparted power,
 I can endure e'en such an hour.

I fondly hoped my child to rear, a witness for his God,
 A labourer in that blessed sphere which sainted ones have trod:
 But who am I, that I should be
 The chooser of his destiny!

Perhaps it is an infant lyre which waits for him to rise,
 Perhaps the choir of heaven require an infant's voice of praise:
 If it will bring more praise to Thee,
 Then take him, Lord, in infancy.

CHILDREN AND FLOWERS.

THE gardener's son was only three years old, but so passionate and self-willed, that his parents found it very difficult to manage him. If he did not get what he asked for immediately, he would stamp with his little feet, strike every one that opposed him, and even throw anything he had sufficient strength to wield. To check these passionate outbursts each parent would occasionally correct him—his father sometimes rather severely—but, hitherto, with no improvement. The child, discovering that he was flogged when he did not please his parents, got also to act similarly to those with whom he was not pleased, saying, "I shall flog you, you are very naughty." His father being thus foiled, was led to consider whether a better management might not be adopted with his little son.

He thought of the beautiful plants—many of them rare exotics—entrusted to his care. In order to manage these properly, he knew how much care and patience were required. He remembered how he had studied their habits, and, as far as the nature of the ground would permit, planted them accordingly—some delighting in an exposed situation, others requiring shelter; but although he gave equal care to all, they all did not equally flourish. So the gardener began to reason with himself in this way:

"Here is my beloved boy, given me by the Lord of Heaven, to fit him to be transplanted to a heavenly inheritance. I will treat this plant with the same degree of forbearance I use towards the flowers entrusted to my care by my earthly lord." Reflecting in this way, he saw that when those plants did not flourish according to his wish that he felt no anger against them, but set about to examine the cause, and if possible, remove it. Sometimes those he trusted to water his plants he found neglected to do so; others were in too rich soil; and some, perhaps, not sufficiently good; but withal, he found it necessary to have the ground thoroughly prepared so that the roots might expand and take firm hold of the soil. He would by no means shake or strike the tree, even incautiously or hastily planted.

But one thing he found necessary for all—that, my dear readers, was a *sunbeam*. Whether tall or short, growing on the hill, valley, or side of a stream, each and all refused to flourish when deprived of the sun's rays; these considerations led this father to alter his treatment of his little son, and to determine to give him sufficient light and heat—in other words, *education and kindness*. Not simply send-

ing him to school to learn a few lessons from a book, and, perhaps, an equal number of wild tricks, but to take his child upon his knee, and give him lessons regarding the law of kindness, the beauty of the flowers, the adaption of insect life, the goodness and kindness of God, our Heavenly Father, in thus placing each where the greatest degree of happiness can be attained.

This plan of treating this passionate child is working the desired result. The little face brightens when he hears his father's footsteps, and he runs to meet him, sure at least of a little sunlight; for what can be more like it than the parent's cheerful smile? Instead of walking away with a sullen look of defiance, there is springing up childish trust and confidence, and when outbreaks of temper arise, as arise they will, a few firm words, kindly expressed, even a look of sorrowful reproof, do more, far more to suppress them, than a blow ever did. Parents, you possess a wide field of usefulness, and a fearful responsibility is yours.

There is a false kindness, or lazy indulgence, you are too prone to give way to, not liking to take the trouble to inculcate good habits, particularly those that require example to enforce. Incautious example is every whit as bad as undue severity. Your children are close reasoners; therefore, dear friends, take heed to your ways, that you cause not one of these little ones to offend.—*From "Our Village."*

HOW TO TEACH FILIAL OBEDIENCE.

SOME say that a stern maintenance of parental authority is best, demanding perfect obedience. without any attempt to convince the child of the propriety or kindness of the requisitions, and without any manifestations of sympathy for the pains and difficulties which are to be met. Under such discipline children grow up to *fear* their parents rather than to love and trust them, while some of the most valuable principles of character are chilled, or for ever blasted. In shunning this danger, others pass to the opposite extreme. Nothing is exacted without the implied concession that the child is to be a judge of the propriety of the requisition. This system produces a most pernicious influence; children soon perceive the position thus allowed to them, and take every advantage of it.

The medium course is, for the parent to take the attribute of a

superior who has a perfect right to control every action of the child, and that, too, without giving the reason for the requisition. "*Obey, because your parent commands,*" is a sufficient reason. But care should be taken to convince the child that the parent is conducting a course of discipline designed to make him *happy*; and in forming habits of implicit obedience, self-denial, or benevolence, the child should have the reasons of most requisitions *kindly* stated—not as a right, but as an act of kindness from the parent. It is impossible to govern children properly, especially those of a strong and sensitive feeling, without a constant effort to appreciate the value which they attach to their enjoyments and pursuits.

Next to the want of government, the two most painful sources of evil to children are—*unsteadiness of government*, and *over-indulgence*. Most of the cases in which the children of sensible and conscientious parents turn out badly, result from one or the other of these causes. In cases of unsteady government, either one parent is very strict and severe, and the other excessively indulgent, or else the parents are sometimes very strict and decided, and at other times allow disobedience to go unpunished. In such cases children, never knowing exactly when they can escape with impunity, are constantly tempted to make the trial. Some persons, in shunning this evil, go to the other extreme, and are very pertinacious in regard to every requisition. With these, penalties abound, until the children are hardened into indifference of feeling, or else become excessively irritable or misanthropic.

It demands great wisdom and self-control to escape these extremes. In arriving at this, parents have found the following maxims of great value:—Avoid, as much as possible, the multiplication of rules and absolute commands; and sometimes take the attitude of advisers. There are cases when distinct commands are needful, and in such cases a penalty for disobedience should be as steady and true as the law of Nature.

Another maxim, and perhaps the most difficult is—Do not govern by the aid of severe and angry tones. In some families the most efficient government is sustained without the use of an angry tone; and in others less efficient, discipline is kept up by severe rebukes and angry remonstrances. In the first case, the children follow the example set them, and seldom use severe tones to each other; in the latter case, words and angry tones generally resound from morning to night.

Another important maxim is—Try to keep children in a happy state of mind. Every one knows it is easier to submit to rules when cheerful and happy, than when irritated. This is peculiarly true of children ; and a wise mother, when she finds her child impatient and fretful, and doing wrong, will often remedy the whole by telling some story, or engaging the child's mind in some sport. This shows the importance of learning to govern children without the aid of angry tones, which always produce irritation.

PARENTAL TRAINING.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

THE parent should be to the child the cheerful, the radiant, the easily accessible one, that speaks of things mirthfully where mirth is proper. The child should look upon father and mother as model philosopher, and priest, and friend—as patterns of manhood and womanhood ; and that being so, I tell you there is a great deal of education necessary before we are fit to be fathers and mothers. *The most important thing in this world, next to the soul's salvation, is the taking care of children ;* and yet there is no subject on which there is so much ignorance as on this. Men and women assume the relation of parents without the least knowledge of the duties that belong to that relation. By the time their children have grown up, and passed beyond their control and influence, they begin to say, "I believe if I could turn round and bring up my children again, I could do it more wisely." . . . We must learn how to carry ourselves before we can learn how rightly to take care of children. But we may certainly learn to do this—to make our leisure hours not hours of tattling, certainly not hours of backbiting or scandal, but hours of edifying. Let us do what we do for edification. It will make our lives sweeter and happier. Let us be continually actuated by this thought : How shall I build myself up in a Christian manhood ? How shall I exercise my rights and liberties so that wherever I go I shall build myself up in such a way as to make them better ? May God give us instruction so to build. And when at last we appear in Zion and before God, may we be able to render an account of our stewardship, such that we shall not be ashamed to be called labourers, and such that God shall not be ashamed to call us labourers together with Him ; (Gen. xviii. 19 ; Prov. xxii. 6.)

THE GOSPEL WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SEPT. 9TH, 1861,

BY CHARLES GORDELIER,
AT NEW BROAD STREET CHAPEL,

(Rev. W. O'Neill's.)

(Originally, in substance, preached for the Christian Society of Operative Silk Weavers, at Thorold Square, Bethnal Green, 28th September, 1845.)

As this is the Anniversary of my Sunday afternoon discourses in this place, I have purposely selected a subject that will embrace the main points of gospel truth which I have hitherto set before you; the text you will find in St. Paul's epistle to Timothy, 1st chapter, 15th verse—"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

"All Scripture," it is expressly said, "is given by inspiration;" that is to say, all Scripture is divine truth. Yet it must be obvious to any careful reader of the Bible, that all its truths are not of equal importance; some are infinitely momentous, others are less so, but all are essential to make one "wise unto salvation:" the text before us, I consider, is one of primary importance—infininitely momentous. If the truth in this Scripture be not known, whatever else we may know, we are still ignorant of the one thing needful, and to be without a personal sense of its value, is to be spiritually "miserable, blind, and naked," it is living in the dark, groping about in the error of our way to those regions where all is misery, despair, and death.

In this epistle, the apostle after having spoken of God's goodness in revealing himself to him, speaks in terms of high admiration of the great central truth of the gospel—salvation by Christ. He draws the attention of Timothy, as a young student of divine truth to take particular notice of this great and important doctrine; it is one which concerns the whole human family—the fallen sons and daughters of Adam, of every one now present. And like as when the joyful news of the Saviour's incarnation was proclaimed by angels, so this glorious truth which we are about to contemplate, it is prefixed by a phrase to excite our attention, and is announced as one full of heavenly truth, "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation"—as if the apostle should say, "Oh, this is indeed a most wonderful truth, proclaim it everywhere throughout the wide, wide world." What

The Family Preacher.

if some will stumble at its profundity—what if some will deride its simplicity, still this truth, like the sun, it stands high in the heaven of gospel grace, there it is, it is too full of truth to be disputed down by sceptics, it cannot be disproved—it is too high for those who affect to despise it, they may pretend to attack it but they cannot touch it. This truth, like its glorious author, is full of grace and truth, it is indeed worthy of all acceptance, every way and everywhere acceptable, not to be in any way discredited, in no way unsuitable; it is just what the fallen condition of man requires; its adaptation is universal—its operation is confined to no places, nor is it restricted by any circumstances.

As to the meaning of the text, that is sufficiently plain and requires no explanation, it is too plain to be explained, I cannot make it more plain than it is, and, therefore, without further remark shall proceed to notice—

I. The characters here spoken of—Sinners.

II. The object of Jesus Christ—their salvation.

I. *The characters mentioned in the text—Sinners.* Here let me premise—our gracious Redeemer, the eternal Son of God, when incarnate, emphatically said, “I came not to call the righteous but *sinners* to repentance,” you perceive at once the objects for whom his mission was designed; sinners are the object of his love, his care and salvation. But let us inquire what is to be understood by the term sinner, for it is a word frequently used yet but seldom apprehended as to its serious import. A sinner is one who has committed a crime against God’s law. Sin is a want of conformity to the will of God, or as the apostle John has stated it, (1 John iii. 4)—“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Now as God is holy, his commandments are holy and the obedience required is perfect; but the apostle Paul in the 5th chapter of Romans has shewn that by one man’s sin all have sinned and come short of the glory of God—his attributes of holiness, goodness and happiness. The moral image of the divine creator in which man was created was lost by Adam’s transgression. Jehovah, speaking by the prophet, Isaiah xliii. 27, says, “Thy first father hath sinned”—and Romans v. 19, by “his disobedience to the divine command many were made sinners,” so that mankind are sinners not only by actual transgression, but also by what is technically called, original sin, that is, sin inherited by the whole human race, and derived from our original parent Adam, “by one man,” that is Adam, “sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans v. 12.

But though it is plainly revealed that the whole world is guilty before God and that God will by no means clear the guilty, yet how few there are who seem to be rightly affected by a consideration of this solemn fact, some perhaps now present, are not only unaffected by these solemn realities but, it may be, are actually careless about them. They are like persons in a swoon, the head is sick, the heart is faint, near to death, but they know it not. It is true many will admit they are sinners, but their notion of sin is so slight, their views of God’s mercy so imperfect, that unless guilty of crimes for which the world will blame them, they think they will certainly pass muster at the great judgment day; God is, say they, so good, so merciful, he will not expect perfect obedience. Now these persons are dead in sin, shrouded in ignorance. Satan has blinded their understandings, their wills are perverted and they sport themselves with their own deceivings. So it is until it pleases

God in his infinite mercy, by his Spirit, to awaken them to a sense of their lost condition, convicts them of sin, that is, proves it to their own conscience, that they are sinners in heart as well as in life, then under the terrors of a wounded conscience, a broken law, an offended God, they exclaim, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

Just let me add one remark in passing, a knowledge of the method by which we may be saved can be of little avail without a knowledge of ourselves as sinners in the sight of God; it is the sick man who needs the physician; it is the poor man who needs the help of the rich; it is the hungry who asks for bread; it is the naked who needs clothing, so none but those who are brought to *feel* their lost condition will seek salvation in Christ.

But when the soul is quickened by God the Holy Ghost, sees the breadth of God's law, that it extends to the thoughts as well as to the life—feels its inability to serve God in any of its requirements and that without a perfect performance of every part of that law and throughout the whole of its life, it must be banished from God for ever, without hope, and to remain with damned spirits, shut up in everlasting despair and woe, can we wonder at the amazing distress of soul that is occasioned by these deep views of spiritual truth. "What must I do to be saved?" has been wrung out of many a poor soul in bitter anguish, knowing that without a salvation by which their consciences can be eased, their hearts cleansed, and yet God's law be duly honored and be made righteous in his sight, they cannot escape the judgment due to sin, nor can they hope to obtain that state of bliss prepared for those who love God and are called to be saints. But happily, the poor soul is not left in suspense of hope and fear. The Spirit of God exhibits to the view of the soul, Jesus as his salvation—he is revealed as the only refuge—the only way by which he can flee from the wrath to come; he is drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ by the love of God the Father; he lays hold of the hope set before him, embraces the Gospel, and finds peace and freedom through the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin.

"The guilty soul that trusts his blood,
Finds peace and pardon at his cross;
The sinful soul averse to God,
Believes and loves his maker's laws."

Having spoken a little of what sin is and consequently what is the character and condition of a sinner, and also slightly glanced at the process by which the soul is brought to believe in Jesus and to find salvation, we now come to our next point.

II. *The object of Jesus Christ—the salvation of sinners.* Let us inquire in what way this has been effected—our text says he came into the world—by which we are to understand he took our nature. The divine word, the eternal Son of God became flesh and dwelt amongst us—was there then no other way in which men could be saved? No, indeed, there was not, or doubtless some other method would have been provided. The truth is, the *nature* in which sin had been committed had to suffer, and there was no way in which atonement to God could be made and the sinner saved but by *substitution*—not only was there a necessity for satisfaction, but also for substitution. Now both of which Christ voluntarily undertook, he not only became our substitute but he also gave satisfaction to divine justice, that is, made an atonement to God. By the one offering which Christ made for sin he has for ever perfected them that are sanctified, brought in an ever-

lasting righteousness which is imputed to all who believe in his name, and thus as sin hath reigned unto death even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life. Thus God's law was honored, his justice vindicated, and the authority of his government respected and maintained.

1. But further, "He came into the world to save sinners"—*By taking away their sin.* "Ye know," saith the apostle John, "that he was manifested to take away our sin," that is, came into the world, appeared in our nature, as has just been observed. In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the prophet there speaks "his soul was made an offering for sin, he bore the sin of many, he was wounded for our transgressions," or, as it reads in the margin, "he was tormented for our transgressions"—"he was pounded as in a mortar, for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him, and with his bruises we are healed."

The apostle Paul in one place, (2 Cor. v. 21,) speaking of the same subject says, "he," that is God the Father, "made him," Christ, "to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"—made to be sin! there was a positive necessity for Christ to be made sin, though he himself was perfectly sinless; yet sin must be punished, "God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity." Habakkuk i. 13. Sin must suffer the sentence of his righteous law, either in the person of the sinner or that of a substitute; this, I think, may be clearly seen from the following passages of holy writ; in Ezekiel xviii. 4, it is there said by Jehovah himself, "the soul that sinneth it shall die," that is, shall cease to exist in the enjoyment of divine favor, divine life, and divine blessedness; and it is God alone who has the right of inflicting punishment on the soul which sinneth, for God declares his right of property in every soul; they are his property by creation and by his power as Lord of all, and in the passage just referred to, the Lord says, "Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth it shall die." God has then a right to inflict punishment for sin; his attributes of holiness and justice are not to be sacrificed to mercy. Nay, rather than that, it is as if God had said, "mine own son shall take the sinner's place;" he appeals to the prophet, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live," and in another place, it is positively declared, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God." How strikingly is this set forth in the 33rd chapter of Job, 24th verse—"Deliver him," saith God, "from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom," or, as it reads in the margin, "I have found an atonement." Oh what infinite wisdom, what infinite grace, to devise such a scheme of mercy and grace—atonement by substitution! this atonement is exhibited to us as being found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ—he came into the world "to put away sin" by the sacrifice of himself. Then as Adam sinned by his own free will so Christ's atonement must be voluntary too, and that it was voluntary will appear from what is said in Psalm xl. 7, 8, "Lo, I come . . . I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." And when the Redeemer began his work he then revealed that his atonement originated in God's everlasting love to man. "For God," said he, "so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. John iii. 16; Jeremiah xxxi. 3.

2. He came into the world to sinners *by conquering Satan*. The first intimation of this is in that venerable prophecy in the 3rd chapter of Genesis, where Jehovah declares "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent, though Satan for a time will be permitted to bruise his heel;" accordingly we find, that as soon as the Redeemer commenced his public life, Satan beset him with his fiendish temptations, but the prince of this world found nothing in him; Jesus, with the sword of the spirit, the word of God, totally vanquished him and drove him out of the field. The disciples on their return from their first campaign against Satan's kingdom, came rejoicing to find that the devils were subject unto them; Jesus replied, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven;" at another time, when he sent an answer to Herod, he said to the messengers, "go ye and tell that fox, behold I cast out devils!" contemplate his almighty power even in the days of his flesh; again, only a week previous to his death, when there was a voice from heaven in answer to his prayer, he exclaimed, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out." See John xii. 31. As a proof he had power over the devil, see also the 1st verse of the 9th chapter of Luke, where he gave his disciples *power and authority over all devils!* this was actually the case, see in the 17th verse of the 10th chapter of John, when the disciples said, "Lord *even the devils* are subject unto us through thy name;" thus by casting out devils he destroyed their power. Again, the apostle John saith, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose was the Son of God manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." I John iii. 8.

The apostle Paul also, in speaking of Christ taking our flesh, expressly says (Heb. ii. 14)—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same," now mark this, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The devil is here said to have had the power of death; by the word *power* we are to understand the *cause*. Satan was the cause of death, for he was the cause of sin, and death was the effect. So at the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus, it is said, "he spoiled principalities and powers, he triumphed over them." Again, at his resurrection, he shewed himself still more the conqueror over him who had the power of death in rising from the grave by his own spirit; by his own power he gave up his life, and by his own power he took it again. Death had no dominion over him.

3. He came into the world to save sinners—*by conquering death itself*; by the term death, I do not mean merely the separation of the soul from the body, a ceasing to exist in this life; but of that spiritual separation between the soul and God, as the curse of the broken law in consequence of sin, and which death is felt and manifested in the want of a conformity to the divine image—we are ignorant—unholy—evil and incapable thereby of dwelling in his presence and holding fellowship with him—for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, what communion hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial.

In the chapter we read at the commencement of this service, we have the words—"Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for all have sinned." Now it was necessary when Jesus undertook our cause that *death* as the consequence or effect of sin should be forever destroyed and annihilated; for death is the most powerful foe we have to con-

tend with ; hear then what saith the Scriptures, Hosea xlii. 14, " I will ransom them from the power of the grave ; I will redeem them from death ; O death, I will be thy plagues ; O grave I will be thy destruction." In Isaiah xxviii. 8, we read, " He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces ; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from all the earth, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Paul also in writing to Timothy, 2nd Epistle i. 9 and 10, " Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began ; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, *who hath abolished death*, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Yes, Jesus is the mighty conqueror before whom no foe can stand, " for he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death*." Yes, the believer in Jesus may triumphantly exclaim, " O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" You who are enslaved by the fear of death, take encouragement from these precious truths, the salvation of Jesus is complete ; by him a new and living way is opened, by which we can approach and come near to his Father and our Father. The way of approach to God is now opened by the death of Christ ; and by his resurrection, as already noticed, death has now lost his dominion over the believer in Jesus. He that believeth in Jesus hath eternal life, life for evermore ; so that now, there is no such thing as death, there can be no separation between God and the soul ; death is so completely done away, abolished and annihilated ; Satan is so completely conquered that the possibility of the believer ever sinning so as to incur the penalty of death is rendered utterly impossible. Death is swallowed up in victory by our Lord Jesus Christ.

But let us proceed ; our text says, he came into the world to save sinners ; are we to understand by that, all mankind, for all are sinners ? certainly not. What then ? are some saved, and some not ? most assuredly. God saves no one in their hardness of hearts and impenitence. The salvation provided in Jesus Christ is only for believing, repenting sinners ; it is not for the impenitent unbeliever—the impenitent drunkard is not saved—the impenitent fornicator and adulterer are not saved, nor yet the impenitent swearer, nor the thief, nor even the liar ? No, God hath from the beginning chosen those who shall be heirs of salvation according to the good pleasure of his will ; these, with all their persons, grace, and glory, he hath put into the hands of Christ, and constituted him their divine and glorious head ; the Holy Ghost, in this time-state regenerates, illuminates and sanctifies every soul thus secured in the covenant of grace by the word of truth. The glory of Jehovah is great in the salvation of his people ; his goodness, wisdom and justice, all harmonize in the plan of redemption for lost sinners. Every redeemed sinner is known by his fruit ; true belief, true repentance, and a godly life constitute the mark of all those for whom the precious blood of the Lamb has been shed ; read at your leisure, the 46th verse to the 48th of the 12th chapter of John ; again, he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved ; he that believeth not shall be damned.

Nor is there any other way, nor any other name under heaven by which men can be saved ; it is the only way which God hath appointed—by believing the record which he hath given of his Son ; God has given the light of the gospel to all, " that all men through Jesus Christ might believe" (John i. 7) ; he that believeth not shall be

condemned for his unbelief and rejection of the gospel, and his punishment will be that he will be cast out into that place of torment prepared for the devil and his angels.

Christ Jesus saves freely—without any merit, worthiness or condition on our part. “By grace are ye saved, through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” Every believer in Jesus is a vessel of mercy, an object of sovereign love, saved by an act of sovereign grace, and to the sovereign grace of God will all salvation be ascribed.

“ ’Tis not by works of righteousness
Which our own hands have done ;
But we are saved by sovereign grace,
Abounding through his Son.”

He saves fully—he saves completely, entirely. Not a part is left undone for us to finish. He saves every class of sinners who come to him for life and salvation, whether they be old or young, rich or poor, learned or illiterate. No sinner, however vile or notorious he may have been, yet, if he be truly repentant, there is pardon and peace for him from the fountain of Jesus’ blood, ever flowing, ever full ; yes, he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

“ No sinner was ever yet empty sent back,
Who came seeking mercy for Jesus’s sake.”

This then is the sum and substance of the gospel of Jesus Christ—it is the good news from heaven.

“ The joyful news of sin forgiven.
Of hell subdued, and peace with heaven.”

Now as it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness, let us then ask the important question: do you believe that you are a sinner in the sight of God? do you believe, with all your heart, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners? you either do or do not ; there’s no middle state, you are either a believer or an unbeliever, these are the only two classes in which man is divided as to his condition before God ; these are solemn facts. If your eyes have been enlightened to see yourself a sinner, a lost, ruined creature—if you have felt the need of a Saviour, and have fled to him as the only hope set before you in the gospel, bless and praise the Lord for the revelation of such a mercy, for “none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good.” But if you have not fled to Jesus as a hiding place from the storm of divine Justice, which is now hovering over your guilty head, you are, let me tell you, in all faithfulness and in the name of Christ, yet in your sins, dead in trespasses and sins—dead to God—without hope in the world. Think of this, ponder it over ; let me, I entreat you, study the things that make for your eternal peace ; the concerns of your immortal soul demand your most serious consideration ; “Thus, saith the Lord, consider your ways”—consider, too, that you possess all the opportunities that can be offered by a good and gracious Providence ; you have the Bible, you can read it, there is nothing in that book but what is intelligible to all who read it for instruction and devotion ; you can attend a place of worship, there is nothing to prevent your thoughtful meditation on the subject presented to your notice, nor is there anything to hinder you from bending your knees before God in humble prayer, and to supplicate his mercy. God will bless you, he will come and save you. Be wise, therefore, and reflect that shortly you will be called away from this time-state, and

to appear before God, your Maker and your Judge; conscience will be your witness: to God you are accountable for every action, for every idle word, for every thought.

Oh how blessed to be found in Christ, to be assured that the curse due to you for your sins has been borne away by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ; let me again remind you that life is the only season of preparation. The young are not too young, nor the aged too old. God has mercifully and graciously provided a method by which you may return to him, through Jesus Christ; the way is open, the way is plain, the way is easy, the way is safe; what doth hinder? Is it sin? Is it unbelief? Harken! "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon."

But to you who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, what heavenly music sounds in our text, "It is a faithful saying, &c.," you have found the truth of it, you have, doubtless, sweetly felt the consolation this precious truth affords—the glorious fact that Jesus Christ has saved you—he has saved you from the curse of the law; saved you from hell; saved you by taking away your sin; saved you by conquering Satan; saved you by conquering death itself; thus you have a hope for which you would not exchange a thousand worlds; you are living on Jesus, you love Jesus, you love his word, you love his house, you love his people, and you delight in this great truth of which we are speaking; it is the support and solace of your heart; "It is a faithful saying, &c.;" Satan may perhaps harrass you and much perplex you; he may suggest "you have no interest in Christ, you are not a true believer," tell him you are a sinner, and that Jesus Christ saves sinners—that you believe "It is a faithful saying, &c." Perhaps he may suggest "you are too great a sinner to be saved;" ask him how that can be? tell him it is impossible, for the Apostle says that he is the chief of sinners, surely I cannot be greater than the chief? No, none are too great, none too unworthy, none too wretched.

But should there be one who feels himself burdened with guilt, anxious for its removal—anxious for sin to be pardoned—go then to the mercy-seat; go to God in secret, and in humble and fervent prayer, make a full and free confession of all your sins; plead the words of the text. God will hear you, He will save you. You shall know blessedly and happily for yourself that it is indeed "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Amen.

The following Numbers of the Penny Pulpit contain Sermons by the same author:—

No. 3,403—"God's Children fed by Himself."

No. 3,417—"The Christian's mouth closed through Sin."

No. 3,536—"The Nest destroyed, but the Bird saved."

No. 3,552—"Quenching the Spirit."

No. 3,580—"Samson losing his strength, a warning to Backsliders."

Sketches and Essays.

PARENTAL DISCIPLINE.

A PASTOR'S LETTER TO A CHRISTIAN MOTHER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am assured that you love your children, that you ardently seek their happiness, their true prosperity, both here and hereafter. It is to promote these objects infallibly that I now write to you. I have often thought of conveying to you at large my views in regard to parental discipline, as I feel convinced you have not hitherto fully understood them. But to-day I intend simply to inquire, *What are the direct commands of the Lord on the subject?* And however repulsive some of the statements I am about to give may be to your maternal feelings, yet, if we receive the plain meaning of the word of God, who can prescribe for your direction nothing that is wrong, we shall, indeed, see eye to eye regarding it. I am indeed grieved and almost heart-broken with the fearful amount of vital injury done by multitudes of professing Christian parents, and all from false kindness, and from a selfish desire to save their own feelings. These sow the seeds of misery and increased future rebellion against God in their children, and how large a harvest Satan reaps from that seed let the past and present history of the world disclose. It is high time that the Christian world were thoroughly aroused to consider this subject in the light of eternity; though, indeed, it is remarked by the celebrated Coleridge, that it is in vain to reason with many against their feelings! But my only dependence is on the blessing of the Holy Spirit accompanying a faithful declaration of the truth.

Before, then, writing down God's own words on the subject, let me say that I fully agree with you that all children (in regard to discipline) are not to be treated alike. Some strong and naturally rebellious spirits need a great deal more firmness and correction than those who are gentle and pliable, and boys in general need much more than girls. I also agree with you, that the less that correction is inflicted on children, (that is, in other words, the less they need it,)

The Mother's Magazine. December, 1861.

without injury to their disposition and training, so much the better. My heart is full of love to the young, and it gives me so much pain to hear them suffering, that, were it not absolutely necessary, and most clearly commanded by God, I would never approve of painful bodily correction being inflicted at all, especially on little ones. But when God speaks, it is most sinful and dangerous to confer with flesh and blood whether or not his commands shall be obeyed, evaded, or neglected altogether. And yet I believe (would that I were mistaken) that these commands are broken in regard to a vast majority of the children of professing Christians, who are thus almost ruined by indulgence, and by not having their wills properly subdued when they are young.

Every child brings into the world a proud, a wicked, a most rebellious nature. Their very spiritual disease, (that which is the source of all their future sins and miseries,) is self-will. And God says, and experience says, and everybody says who has studied the subject, that kindness alone will never subdue the proud self-will of children.

Surely God loves all children, and yet he orders painful correction to do them good when they rebel. Would Infinite Benevolence prescribe this if it were not necessary? Shall we presume to be wiser than God, or more tender-hearted? What can I think of parents who seem to feel that they love their children more than God, and who, therefore, practically condemn his appointed way? I am, indeed, ready to believe that some parents inflict too much suffering on their children, are too harsh, and do not sufficiently bestow suitable kindness and encouragement. This is very wrong, and must tend to undermine the healthful influence of these parents on their children. But for one, perhaps, who goes wrong in too much correction, hundreds, if not thousands, go wrong in too little, and in too much indulgence; and thus by feeding the moral disease of self-will, they render the obstacles to their children's conversion greater and greater.

Let me further say, before quoting God's ordinance on the subject, that we have no more authority for attending to public worship or to the Lord's Supper; no more authority for believing that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten," than you have for obeying the commands I am about to mention. For the self-same authority that commands "all men everywhere to repent,"—that says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,"

—also commands, “Chasten thy son while there is hope.” Do not think, I beseech you, that I am contending for *undue* severity, or extremes in correction. Far, very far, from it—the very opposite: I am only arguing for the binding obligation on parents to give the medicine to children which God has prescribed when they need it—neither too much nor too little—in order that in a little time they may need none at all. Is that severity? But I do regard it as the height of severity and cruelty to allow the spiritual disease in children to strengthen and increase, because it is painful for them to receive and doubly painful for the parents to give God’s ordained medicine. How true is the Word of God, “He that spareth the rod hateth the child.” Oh could my voice reach those who thus sacrifice their children to spare their own temporary distress, I would say, “Be ashamed of your lack of moral courage and firmness, and of your deficiency of that true affection which, for the lasting good of its object, spares not itself.”

And now for the law on the subject, which, as God’s children, we are bound to obey.

The Parent inquires, Why, O Lord, should I put my children to pain, by correction, when they act improperly?

The Lord replies, “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

The Parent. But I cannot bear, O Lord, to hear my children crying in pain, it goes to my heart; and I am glad, therefore, to omit punishment, and to employ any gentler means.

The Lord. “Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.” Do not stop short of doing my will, though the screaming from the proud heart of the rebellious child is like a lance in thy body; it is I that commandeth thee, “Spare him not for his crying.” Prov. xix. 18.

Parent. But I am averse to inflicting bodily chastisement—I am afraid that if I beat him it will do his body harm.

The Lord. “Withhold not correction from the child (and for thy encouragement I say unto you,) for when thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die.” Prov. xxiii. 13. Take heed that you do not yield to your feelings in this matter. You are training up the children for me. Keep close to my commandments.

Parent. But I am afraid, O Lord, that if I chasten strictly it will tend to *harden* them, so that they shall come to despise it and hate their parents.

The Lord. So far from hardening your children, where it is prudently and firmly done *in dependence on my blessing*, that I say unto you, "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." Prov. xxix. 17. Why do you not believe me? Obey, and you shall find that this is one of the ways to make your children constantly and truly happy; whereas the gratification you give them by indulging their wills and restraining correction is most deceitful, and will assuredly end in misery.

Parent. Suffer me once more to speak. It was love to my children that hitherto prevented me from putting them to bodily pain when they went wrong. My love was so great, that I was anxious, if possible, to seek their present enjoyment in every way, avoiding all severity and strictness; but now I begin to see I was wrong, and by thy grace, I will change my manner of training.

The Lord. Your love in such a proceeding was *false love*, it was *selfish love*—in its real effects it was no other than *hatred*; for, is it not written, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes?" Oh, my grief with Israel was, that the foolish parents did not correct their children, therefore I wrote to them, "In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction." Jer. ii. 30. But look at my example. Did I not love my Son, and yet, though he was perfectly holy, I spared him not, but "freely gave him up to the death" for all. Rom. viii. 32. Have I not a special delight in my children, and yet, for their good, do I not often put them to the greatest bodily and mental pain? Is it not written, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "Our fathers corrected us, and we gave them reverence." What son is he whom the father correcteth not? True, indeed, "no chastening (either to old or young) for the present is joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby."

Thus, my dear friend, have I laid before you the holy will of God on this great subject. It is love to your beloved children, and especially love to God and to his cause, which has led me to do so. I do believe, (and you will ponder it,) that *one* reason which leads the Lord to send so many children to an early grave, is to take them out of the hands of over-fond and over-indulging parents, who would not truly train them up for him. Nothing, I am sure, but great grace, can enable you fully to obey God in this particular; for, to your

most affectionate and tender feelings, it must be doubly painful to put your children to such suffering. But let me repeat, for your comfort, that if you do it, at proper times, especially for disobedience—regarding it as an ordinance, a means of grace, appointed by God; and if you daily pray for God's blessing, both before and after you have finished your painful duty, you will indeed give glory to God, and your children in after life, and it may be, when you are in the grave, will bless your memory, and thank God for the inestimable blessing of a *firm* and affectionately faithful mother who duly administered the medicine of God, and thus laid the foundation of their immortal health.

I need scarcely add, that there are various modes of correction, and you will select one best suited at the time for the offender and the offence. But it is extremely injudicious to administer correction under excitement or irritation. Far better, after prayer, to show the child that God bids you do it for his good; and, after it has been administered, it is wrong to allow the offending child to leave your presence without in some way indicating that his spirit is humbled and his will subdued—such, for example, as by asking pardon, or showing some token of submission. If this be refused, your duty is but half done, and you must not leave him, however much pain you cause both him and yourself, till, for his soul's sake and the Redeemer's sake, *you have gained the victory*. Do pray over this letter. That God may bless it, is the fervent prayer of

Your sincere friend and pastor,

E. C.

A SPOILED BOY:—Who was he? He was Adonijah, one of David's sons. How was he spoiled? By having his own way, and not being corrected by his father when he did wrong. The record is, "His father displeased him not at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so?" How do you know that he was spoiled? His conduct shows it; he was puffed up with vanity and pride, was headstrong, and disobedient, and profligate. He aspired after the throne; said, "I will be king, and prepared him chariots, and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him," and treated his royal parent with contempt. To what end did he come? To no good end. Such self-conceited, arrogant, wicked boys never come to a good end. He died the ignominious death of a traitor. He was executed. Mathew Henry, commenting upon the course of this spoiled boy

says, "He in return made a fool of his father. Because he was old and confined to his bed, he thought that no notice was to be taken of him, and therefore he exalted himself, and said, 'I will be king.' Children that are indulged learn to be proud and ambitious, and that is the ruin of a great many young people." And we regret to be forced to add, that in our judgment, it is the ruin of as many young people now as it was in the days of King David; and in the seventeenth century, when good Mathew Henry flourished. "A child left to himself brings his parents to shame," has been true in all past generations, and is true now.

MARTIN LUTHER AND HIS DYING DAUGHTER.

LUTHER was called to part with Magdalen at the age of fourteen. She was a most endearing child, and united the firmness and perseverance of the father, with the gentleness and delicacy of the mother. When she grew very ill, Luther said, "Dearly do I love; but, O my God, if it be thy will to take her hence, I resign her to thee without a murmur."

He then approached the bed, and said to her, "My dear little daughter, my beloved Magdalen, you would willingly remain with your earthly father; but, if God calls you, you will also willingly go to your heavenly Father."

She replied, "Yes, dear father; it is as God pleases."

"Dear little girl," he exclaimed, "oh how I love her! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

He then took the Bible and read to her the passage in Isaiah: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

He then said, "My daughter, enter thou into thy resting-place in peace."

She turned her dying eyes towards him, and said, with touching simplicity, "Yes, father."

The night preceding her death, Catharine, (the child's mother) worn out with watching, reclined her head on the sick-bed and slept. When she awoke, she appeared much agitated; and, as soon as Philip Melancthon arrived, she hastened to him and told her dream.

"I saw two young men, who seemed to be clad in robes of light,

enter the room. I pointed to Magdalen, who lay quietly sleeping, and made a sign to them not to disturb her; but they said they came to conduct her to the bridal ceremony."

Melancthon was much moved, and afterwards said to his wife, "These were holy angels that Catharine saw in her dream; and they will conduct the virgin to her bridal in the celestial kingdom."

When her last moments were near, she raised her eyes tenderly to her parents, and begged them not to weep for her. "I go," said she, "to my Father in heaven," and a sweet smile irradiated her dying countenance. Luther threw himself upon his knees, weeping bitterly, and fervently prayed God to spare her to them; in a few moments she expired in the arms of her father. Catharine, unequal to repressing the agony of her sorrow, was at a little distance, perhaps unable to witness the last long-drawn breath. When the scene was closed, Luther repeated fervently, "The will of God be done!—yes, she has gone to her Father in heaven." Philip Melancthon, who, with his wife, was present, said, "Parental love is an image of the divine love impressed on the hearts of men; God does not love the beings he has created less than parents love their children."

When they were about putting the child into the coffin, the father said, "Dear little Magdalen, I see thee now lifeless, but thou wilt shine in the heavens as a star! I am joyous in spirit, but in the flesh most sorrowful. It is wonderful to realize that she is happy—better taken care of—and yet to be so sad."

Then turning to the mother, who was bitterly weeping, he said, "Dear Catharine, remember where she is gone—ah, she has made a blessed exchange. The heart bleeds without doubt; it is natural that it should; but the spirit, the immortal spirit, rejoices. Happy are those who die young;—children do not doubt—they believe; with them all is trust; they fall asleep."

When the funeral took place, and the people were assembled to convey the body to its last home, some friends said they sympathized with him in his affliction. "Be not sorrowful for me," he replied; "I have sent a saint to heaven. Oh may we all die such a death! Gladly would I accept it now!"

THE MOTHER WHO SPOILED HER CHILD :—"She will have her reward. She cultivates a *night-shade* and is destined to eat its poisoned berries." -- *John Foster.*

FREAKS OF FASHION.

THE fashions of the present day are exerting a most injurious influence on domestic life and morality. There is now a strife among the different classes of society which shall be the greatest. The city merchant imitates the style of his aristocratic neighbour in the mansion he must occupy, the equipage he must drive, the company he must entertain, and the appearance his family must make in society. The prosperous tradesman imitates the merchant, the clerk his employer, and even the servant her mistress; and in the great struggle to keep up appearance, each launches out into extravagant expenditure, lives up to, even if he does not go beyond, his average income, and often becomes reckless of consequences so long as the fashionable appearance is maintained.

There is a story told of an Irishman, who, on returning from market one day, was observed lashing his horse most furiously and galloping by the side of two gentlemen. His friend, seeing fish after fish drop on the road from his panniers, cried out to him to stop or he would lose all his fish. "Hurrah!" cried Pat, "bother tak' ye, and what do I care as long as I keep up with the gentlemen?"

It is this "keeping up with the gentlemen," at any cost, which is the source of much of the domestic unhappiness, commercial dishonesty and criminal frauds to which our attention has been so recently drawn. The ladies must have their splendid silks and expensive lace, or they positively affirm they have "nothing to wear;" the gentlemen must have their sumptuous dinners well-served, and expensive wines, or they raise the piteous cry they have "nothing to eat;" the family must possess its suburban mansion, elegantly furnished, its gay equipage, and its rounds of balls and parties, or else life becomes a mean, vulgar thing, scarcely to be endured! The goddess, Fashion, must be revered; her smiles are captivating, and her frowns withering; her favor, therefore, must be propitiated at any cost; and honor, truth, social virtue, and even common honesty, must be sacrificed to maintain the worship of this powerful deity!

When we think of the many splendid houses which have already been crushed by these freaks, and see the thousands of lovely victims who have been ruined by such catastrophes, we may well ask, with Lord S. G. Osborne, "Where is the present wild extravagance in 'dress,' to end? Is each succeeding season to record its ruinous increase? Is it possible that folly can further go—that English

ladies will become more enslaved to a power which is gradually vitiating the taste of every class?"

Extravagance in dress is the fostering parent of many injurious fashions, and these not only "vitate the taste," but also destroy the self-respect, the happiness and prosperity of every class that imitates them. The fashionables often resort to the meanest tricks to increase the splendour of their appearance, and grind down their different tradesmen, who, in their turn, oppress their dependents and work-people.

Nor does the injurious influence of Fashion end there. The children receive an education of a vitiated character; they grow up with false views of life, and early learn to imitate, and sometimes to surpass, the extravagance of their parents. In the recent discussions in the daily journals on marriage and the great social evil, the baneful influence of extravagant habits of young persons was painfully illustrated. They very naturally hesitate to enter the connubial state till they can afford to support the expenditure of a fashionable establishment; hence the young ladies either pine away in single life, and fall victims to fashionable follies, or render the domestic hearth unhappy; and the young men perpetuate and increase that terrible social evil which disfigures our streets, and stains our national character. *Meliora.*

THE CHILD'S REBUKE.

BEING on a railway excursion one day, the carriages were nearly full when a lady, evidently in ill-health, entered, leading a little son of four or five years. She paused and looked around in vain for a vacant seat. The gentleman by my side, perceiving her embarrassment, sprang to his feet, and politely offered his seat, which was accepted with a grateful acknowledgment. She was about to take her little boy in her arms, when a gentleman, on the opposite side, extended his hands, saying with a winning smile, "Come here, my boy, come and sit down upon my knee; I am better able to hold you than your mother is." The child looked up for his mother's consent, and then joyfully sprang to the seat so kindly offered. For some few minutes the gentleman amused himself by asking the child all manner of questions, drawing out his curious ideas, and listening with satisfaction to his artless replies.

Soon, however, his attention was drawn to an article in the paper

he had just laid aside, and, giving the boy some sweetmeats, he entered into a political discussion with another gentleman by his side. At first it seemed they only sought amusement, and jokes and laughter were frequently intermingled with argument. But the contest gradually waxed stronger, until, at length, jokes were exchanged for profanity.

The boy had been very happy with his new friend, but when the first profane word had been uttered he looked up with astonishment. Tears gathered in his large black eyes, and, laying the watch carefully aside which had been given him for his amusement, he slipped quietly to the floor, and fled to his mother.

"Where are you going, my dear?" exclaimed the gentleman, as he saw him moving off; "come back, my boy, come back; I thought you were very happy a few minutes since; what is the matter? Now come, you are a fine little fellow, come and see what I can find for you in my pocket." But the boy clung to his mother, utterly refusing the extended hand. "Well, now," exclaimed the gentleman with chagrin, "this is very strange, I do not understand it; come, tell me, my boy, why you left me."

"Tell the gentleman, my dear," said his mother encouragingly, "why you do not wish to sit with him." "Because," said he, and he straightened himself back, and summoned all his resolution for the effort, "the Bible says we must not sit in the seat of the scorner."

The gentleman looked confounded; for a moment the blood rushed to his high expansive brow, and I thought he was angry. The mother was also surprised; she had not expected such a reply; but the man instantly regained his composure, and pleasantly said, "I hope you do not call me a scorner." The boy leaned his head on his mother's shoulder, but made no reply. "Come tell me," continued he, "why do you call me a scorner?" The child looked up, and simply, but earnestly said, while a large tear stole quietly down his cheek, "I don't like, sir, to hear you swear so."

"Oh, that is it, is it? Well," continued he, as the mother pressed her son to her bosom, and bowed her head to hide the tears which were starting in her own eyes, "come back, and sit with me, and I promise you I will never swear again." "Won't you" asked the child, earnestly, "then I shall love you very much indeed." Saying this, he allowed the gentleman again to place him on his knees; but it was to be plainly seen that he did not go back with the joyfulness

which he had at first taken the seat. The gentleman saw this; he felt he had lowered himself in the esteem of that honest and noble-minded boy. The thought evidently gave him pain, and he did all he could to efface from his mind the unpleasant recollection. In explanation of this affecting scene, the mother said it was her custom to read a chapter in the Bible every morning to her son, explaining it as she could, and then pray with him; that she had read the first Psalm, and, when explaining to him the character of a scorner, amongst other vices, she had mentioned to him that of profanity: not fully comprehending the subject, but resolved at all events to do right, he thought it was really a sinful act to sit for one moment with a man who had taken God's name in vain. When, oh, when will mothers realize the vast amount of influence they are capable of exerting over their children?

THE WORST CHILDREN IN THE WORLD.

WE once heard a mother say, with a very serious air, "Really, mine are the most tiresome and very worst children in the world: they tell untruths, and deceive me in every possible manner." We were much, very much grieved, and yet we could not help looking with great suspicion upon that parent, and saying to ourselves, "'Tis true, they were shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin, in common with all Adam's children, yet is there no fault attributable to you—their mother? Have you, day by day, endeavoured to lead them in the way they should go? Have you watched every *little* sin, or the *beginning* of sin, and administered to the erring one a gentle reproof—a reproof prompted by love? Have you told them to try to imitate the blessed Jesus, the Saviour of sinners, the meek and lowly one, who was obedient to His parents—whose whole life was love? If you have not faithfully discharged this duty, do not condemn them thus, because by far the greater portion of blame is attached to you, and may-be your children will rise up against you in the last great day, and bear record to mistaken trust."

DR. WATSON, BISHOP OF LLANDAFF:—I owe it to my mother," said Dr. Watson, "and I mention it with filial piety, for imbuing my young mind with principles of religion which have never, never forsaken me."

EARLY EDUCATION.

I AM firmly persuaded that a religious reformation among us must commence in the nursery ; and that, if the next generation is to be seasoned and imbued with evangelical knowledge and genuine piety, the tincture must be imbibed almost with their mother's milk. Alas ! that higher walks of society the great object in the education of young females—imparting to them such solid and useful, above all such religious and scriptural instruction as may qualify them to become teachers of their own future offspring—should be so generally lost sight of amid the dazzling glare of those showy and superficial *accomplishments* which have hitherto been too much the bane, not of “ the world of the ungodly ” without, but also of what is too significantly called the *religious world* within the pale of the professing church ! To view women in the true light of her high destiny—to see what constitutes her true glory and distinction, and invests her with an almost sacred character, when raised to her proper elevation as the *first* teacher, and therefore the *real* trainer of the future race—has been hitherto the rare and extraordinary attainment of a few enlightened and highly-gifted minds. Could effectual measures be adopted to elevate the general standard of female education, and to render its character solid and substantial, rather than merely external and ornamental, a most important service would be rendered both to society and to the church of Christ.—*J. Wilson, Esq.*

“ We want more mothers,” said Napoleon ; “ they are the most influential teachers : with them rests the tuition of the *heart*, so much more influential than that of the head.”

“ I am a missionary in my nursery,” once observed a Christian mother. “ Six pairs of little eyes are daily watching mama's looks, as well as listening to her words ; and I wish my children never to see in me that which they may not imitate.”

I WAS reminded of my mother's precepts, that in self-denial and self-sacrifice was the clue to the mysteries of this life—that the heart is so formed as to be cheered by the reflected rays of another's happiness, and that in seeking the good of others we find our own—“ Whosoever will lose his life ”—whosoever is prepared to make such a sacrifice—is in the proper state of mind “ to save it,” or to enjoy all, that is worth living for.—*Elkerton Rectory.*

GOD MINDFUL OF MAN.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY, MORNING, OCT. 27TH, 1861,

BY THE REV. W. MORLEY PUNSHON,

AT THE HIGHBURY WESLEYAN CHAPEL.

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”—PSALM viii. 3, 4.

CHRISTIANITY, viewed as a system, is never presented to us in so sublime a light as when we consider the oneness and harmony of its grand design. Infidelity is inconsistent with itself. It must be so, for amongst the various objections which the malignity or prejudice of its advocates has brought against the gospel—raked up, as they have been, from all points of the compass, and directed against all kinds of truth—it would be strange indeed if they did not frequently grossly contradict each other. Through the medium of one class of sceptics, infidelity has maintained the dignity and perfectibility of human nature—that it has within it the elements of its own regeneration—that there inheres in it always a principle that is essentially good, and that it needs no gospel, no sage, no spirit to lead it into the way of truth. In the mouths of another class of sceptics infidelity becomes suddenly modest, draws her objection from the very vastness of nature, and places God in his works in opposition to God in his Word. Infidels of this description admit freely the existence of God, and clothe him with his Scriptural attributes of wisdom, and benevolence, and power, but in musing upon the innumerable worlds which float in the firmament, man and his duties are made to disappear and shrink into utter insignificance. The sceptic in the exercise of this spurious modesty, reasons thus:—“What an abject creature is man! How small the difference between himself, insect as he is, and those other insects that he proudly tramples on. However he may boast himself above the pride of human knowledge and the pomp of human power, how he shrinks when he is contrasted with the universe! I am not so presumptuous to believe that a being so low can be brought into contact with God—that the concerns of his existence are ever thought of by the Governor of all—that he is intended to bear a conspicuous part in the higher intelligences of creation. No, dust as he is, his name is only known upon the earth upon which he is born and dies!” Nay, in the rampancy of this scepticism, not satisfied without companionship, they take hold of the inspired Psalmist, and presumptuously try to turn him into an infidel, and, fastening upon the very words we have selected as the text, they say, not as he said it—“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

The Family Preacher.

Now as I read the passage before us it furnishes us with a complete refutation of both these infidel theories. You remember it is the Word of God—authenticated with the rest of the volume in which it is found as the veritable record of God's will. It follows then that those who adhere to the first species of infidelity, that is those who suppose that human nature can regenerate itself—lift itself up in its own unaided strength into more than the manhood of its paradise—enter into a contest with God, and set themselves in opposition to the revelations of his Word. How stands the case? To any one who reads with eyes and heart open, the Psalmist is simply astonished at the condescension of God in visiting creatures so unworthy of his regard. But this proud and self-confident unbeliever imagines that he needs no visitation, and is thankful—if gratitude is a word in his vocabulary—is thankful to believe that he has not been visited at all. There is a very slight and flimsy separation between these mad exulters and the athiests. Neither are absolutely godless men—both are traitors to their own souls. What is it then that they would do? Why, by rejecting revelation, by pronouncing that in man there is everything sufficient for his own guidance, they arraign practically the whole economy of the universe and dethrone Jehovah from the government of his own world, they turn the earth into a wilderness, uncheered by the notice of a superior and creative power, they bereave mankind into a race of desolate and forsaken orphans, with no paternal hand to guide, no paternal heart to cheer, no paternal home to shelter, and with not a ray of comfort or hope to soothe or mitigate their orphanage. Ah, if they would but think for a moment, surely every thought must reprove their pride. What is this Being with whom they come into collision? It is God. Incomprehensible alike in his existence and government. It is God incomprehensible in his existence. Many things we know but we do not know what God is. Our intellect, by slow and toilsome process, advances from infancy to maturity. By strenuous labour we enlarge now and then the field of human knowledge and discovery. There is a fluctuating increase in intelligence from age to age, but the source of intelligence is as far from our conception as ever. We go backward. We implore the sages and lights of antiquity to help us, but the sages are silent and confounded—the oracles are dumb. We go forward and penetrate into the depths of the misty and untravelled future, but there is no glimpse of clearer light beyond, and there only is flung back upon us after all our endeavours, the truth that man by searching cannot find out God. And it is against this God thus incomprehensible in his existence that the infidel sets himself; and oh, all but unparalleled presumption the will of the Holy One who created the universe is resisted by a paltry and a perishable man. What is the Being with whom they come into collision? It is God, incomprehensible in his government. The heavens declare his glory and the firmament sheweth his handiwork, the moon and the stars his fingers hath ordained. In the calm seclusion of a starry night we look up into the heavens above us; we see the glittering orbs; we calculate their distances, and we are lost in wonder at the results of our arithmetic. We try further assistance, and the telescopic

glance shows us new particles of heavenly fire emerging from the darkness, as remote from those that were previously visible as they from us. We get greater strength still, and dim and straggling spots of light appear yet further on in immensity, revolving in their own fiery orbits and with their own fiery brethren around them. And after this troubled vision what have we beheld? Nothing but the thin suburbs of creation; nothing but the sentinels and outposts of the vast army of God. And all this he has created and provides for and regulates and sustains; and it is against this God thus incomprehensible in his government that the infidel rebels; and it is his counsel which manages all these worlds so wisely that the infidel spurns; and it is man—man the sport of illimitable care, the plaything of every pain that racks him, uncertain of his existence for a single moment, unable to discover one solitary step in the track he is about to travel—it is man who lifts himself up from the little speck of dust which is his only heritage, and presumptuously defies his God. Oh brethren, this impiety is grievously out of place; this presumption is not at all befitting. God has inspired our minds but they must not lift themselves up to cope with the source that inspired them. God did create man in his own image but we must not turn our divine relationship into presumption. Let us emulate rather the spirit of the Psalmist; and while we look upon the stellar train, infinite in majesty—while yet each shines as mildly as if made for us, the appointed watchers over our nightly slumbers, let us in no spirit of mere speculation, but of reverent and earnest faith, say, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

And then to turn the passage round it seems to me that it furnishes a refutation of infidelity also in the modest form which it not unfrequently assumes. You remember the statement of the objector is this, “We are too small, too insignificant—fragments of existence as we are—to be brought under the notice, or to occupy the concern or attention of heaven.” It must be conceded at the beginning, that this form of thinking is very much more natural than the other, and it is therefore more difficult to be dislodged from the mind. It is, however, very pernicious in its influence, nor will true religion, understanding true religion to be faith in Christ and the love of God shed abroad in the heart—nor will true religion inhere in the mind till the illusion is dissipated.

If you look narrowly into the objection, you find it very closely allied to the weakness of our present state—that it resolves itself into an infirmity of our perceptive faculties. It is just a struggle of the mind to comprehend and grasp something that is beyond itself, and what is the course of reasoning? Every one of you can follow it for a moment for yourselves. Who sees not, that by supposing ourselves too insignificant to attract the Divine notice, we are practically dethroning the Deity, and making him such an one as ourselves. This is the way we argue:—“We are confused, we are bewildered, we are baffled when we think of the multitude of objects; our knowledge is contracted and scanty, our minds are feeble, our brain recoils from prolonged thought; we cannot grasp great ideas

of vastness without a feeling of pain—therefore he must be similarly oppressed.” We can only judge of what we do not know from the standard of what we do know. “We cannot dwell upon a multitude of objects and manage them aright—very few of us attain to doing one thing well at once—he therefore must be similarly oppressed.” Away with such unworthy conceptions of the God we worship. We are only exalting our conceptions of the Deity when we believe that his eye glances upon every part of the creation, and that while the archangel waits upon his nod, and while all the hosts of heaven attend his bidding, and while all the orbs of heaven are kept in their motions by his power, this earth is not forgotten. Man is highly favoured by his notice. Every blade of grass receives its nourishment from his hand, and he has made of every drop of water a world of pregnant and of teeming life.

If we wanted any proof that there is no comparative vastness or meanness recognised on high, we have but to look on the circle of animated beings beneath us. Of course if we are unworthy to attract divine notice, those beneath us in the scale must be unworthier still; and as we travel from the mightiest to the minutest of the works of God there will be observable, as we go down, a regular decrease of ingenuity, care, and finish in the workmanship. Is it so? Those mighty worlds, mighty in their littleness, which the microscope has revealed to our eyes, do they show us anything clumsily thrown off, inartistically finished, and turned from the loom of creation as if done in a hurry? Ah every one knows that the tinier the more elaborate and finished. And the converse of this infidel objection is proved abundantly by the gorgeous pencillings of every flower that drinks the dew, and by the finished antennæ of every emperor moth that floats upon the breeze. “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?”

And now that we have just furnished a key by which to unlock these infidel mysteries, and show there is nothing inside, let us look practically for a moment or two upon the questions, how and why God is mindful of man. Then probably that will lead us to the conclusion of the whole matter, that we certainly ought to be eminently mindful of God.

How is God mindful of man? I need scarcely put the question, for every phase of man's life, every aspect in which it is possible to look on him, give the answer. He is mindful of man in every moment of his existence—mindful of infancy on its mother's breast or its nurse's arms. Who else can understand an infant's language, and interpret an infant's look. He is mindful of boyhood in the season of passionate and wayward youth when it sports with existence and tosses it about as if it were one of the playthings of its pleasure. He is mindful of manhood in the toils of active life—of age when all other mindfulness terminates, and when the ties to earth have been loosened one by one. He is mindful of them all. And so constantly is this mindfulness manifested—so intense and all-pervading is this essence, that we might almost adopt the language though not the spirit of the Pantheistic philosophers, who tell us that whatever is is God.

And then he is mindful of us inasmuch as he has provided all things needful for our existence. You cannot look around you on the creation of God without discovering that everything that is is for you. For man has the creation been furnished, and the earth formed and fitted that he may dwell on it. For man the sun rises in the east and pursues its course along the heavens and shoots out his beams of fire. For man the moon and the stars perform their nightly revolutions round the midnight throne. For man refreshing zephyrs breathe, and purifying winds blow, and gentle dews rise from beneath and fertilizing rain-drops descend from above. For man the earth is enamelled with flowers and stored with plenty. For man springs gush from the rocks and the throb of the ocean waves is perpetually sounding. All orders of creation bestir themselves when he speaks, and are alive in their endeavours for his benefit. Nature brings the keys of her magnificent treasure-house, and lays them, a vassal, at the feet of man.

He is mindful of us again because he has provided everything not only for our existence but for our happiness. Every portion of the human body, fitting harmoniously together—every duct—every muscle—every nerve—all are of exquisite workmanship, and all show the benevolence of God. For the happiness of his creatures he has gifted us with the innocent pleasures of sense; he has annexed enjoyment to every action of the life; so that when body and mind are alike in health we can neither eat, drink, walk, talk or sleep, without sensations of pleasure. He has gifted us with powers of imagination—made us susceptible of the rich poetry with which he has filled creation. He has given us the capacity for high thoughts and feelings. He has endowed us to expand, to analyze, to illustrate, to compare, to combine. He has gifted us with the principle of friendship; he has implanted in us the social nature. He has gifted us with the pleasures of hope, drawing comfort from every element of sorrow, and soothing each *Marah* of the heart's bitterness. He has gifted us with the pleasures of memory, embalming the recollection of the past in an amber that never fades away and that is proof against the corrupting influences of time, thrilling again the spirit with the pleasures that once thrilled the heart in youth. He has gifted us above all with the pleasures of holiness, the blessed feeling of conscious pardon, the calm satisfaction of assured faith, the enriching comfort of the Holy Spirit—heaven around us, heaven above us, heaven beyond us, heaven within us, and the bright and cheering prospect of the enjoyment of that heaven for ever. Infidels tell us that God has flung this world from his hand and has then left it to shift for itself, and deprived it entirely of his paternal care. God points to man endowed thus richly and tells them that they lie. Infidels have insinuated that if there be a God he dwells in some far off laboratory of power, but that this world of his creation is now orphaned of his grace. God points to all the creation rejoicing in its fitness and in its harmony, and bids them listen to its song.

"The solemn mountain lifts its head, th' Almighty to proclaim,
The brooklet from its crystal bed doth leap to greet his name;
High swells the deep and fitful sea, upon its billowy track,
And red Vesuvius ope's its mouth, to hurl the falsehood back.
No God! With indignation high, yon fervent sun is stirred,
And the pale moon turns paler still, at such an impious word;
And from their thrones in heaven, the stars look down with angry eye,
That thus a worm of dust should mock eternal majesty."

I need not, I am sure, go deeper into details to prove to you that God is mindful of man, and that you are yourselves the recipients of his visitations of lovingkindness and of tender mercy. But if you want to see how he has not left the world to itself from the beginning just take its history from Adam downward. Adam had sensible manifestations of the Creator. He walked and talked with God as a man talketh with his friend, and even after he had defiled himself and estranged himself from divine favour—when he who was the fairest evidence of divine workmanship, became an alien from his presence, and an exile from the garden of his pleasure—there were still manifestations to testify that he was not forgotten of heaven. Noah had evidence of his glory. Abraham was called his friend. Jacob wrestled with him at eventide. Moses was confronted with him in the bush. David felt his influence inspiring his song. Solomon asked at the dedication of the temple, "Will God in very deed dwell with man on earth?" and the cloud of divine presence came in answer so thickly that the priests could not stand to minister. As you advance you light on the bright hosts of prophets, each one of them bearing a message from the presence-chamber unto us, and then in the fulness of time, to which all the prophets look forward, the Son of God was incarnate in furtherance of the purpose of the Father. Surely God was mindful of his creatures then! If you look throughout the whole of that wondrous life you can see nothing but the visitation of God to impress his claims and to supply the needs of his people in a way in which they had never been impressed or supplied before. It was a visit of humility, for he came in the form of a servant, shrouded in meekness, because the world could not bear the brightness of the Father's glory; and he who was the everlasting Son became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. It was a visit of benevolence, for he went about doing good, healing all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases among the people, proving himself the appointed conqueror of death and hell. Do you remember that wondrous visitation at the gates of the city of Nain? There is a young man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she a widow. Death had been an early visitant at her dwelling, but the first stroke had had some element of mercy in it for the son was living still, and in him the husband was reproduced, and while the fair promise of his glorious youth was there, the oil was not all dried up in the poor widow's cruise. But the son has died now. The last refuge and shelter of the desolate heart is torn away, as with the pomp and wailing of the funeral they bore the dead upon his bier. And now, in the gate of the city, where the crowd are gathered, and the noise and discord is greatest, there comes suddenly a silence, and the sounds of woe are hushed. What does it mean? The Son of God is passing by and he came and touched the bier. The widow, who followed in the train, wept, not noisily; but they who looked upon her saw that her sorrow was of that crushing kind that was far too deep for tears. And the Lord pitied her and said, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak, and he delivered him to his mother." Oh that calm and solemn brow, lighted up with a joyous benignity, chased away the shadows of the grave. Well might the discord be changed into music such as no orchestra could compass. Well might the sounds of wailing cease and the sounds of gladness come. Well might the funeral horns ring forth a merry peal, loud, shrill, and piercing, God had visited his people. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

And then specially it was a visit of atonement. Man was under the curse, and from every scene of impurity, and oppression on earth—from the seat of war and of slavery, and of sin in every form, there rose up a cry to heaven of vengeance against the transgressors. It was declared that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin. The substitute must be found or man must perish for ever, and then there came over the silence

of heaven the glad sound, "Lo I come to do thy will oh my God. Here am I, send me." God not visited his people! Oh, go to the judgment hall. See that meek and uncomplaining Saviour. Mark the cruelty and contumely with which he is treated. See the deep wounds of the thorns upon his bleeding brow. Glance into that garden whose flowers are moistened with the bloody sweat that exuded from him in the pressure of his agonies. Look upon the cross, where abject and apparently forsaken, hangs and dies the Son of the highest, and then for very shame let us hear no more that God is unmindful of man.

And then since the Son has ascended up to heaven, God has been mindful of man in the operations and influences of the Spirit. It was Christ's promise—the only promise that kept up the hearts that were ready to faint under the prospect of the spiritual bereavement that they were so soon to sustain. "I, if I go away, will send the Comforter." "I will pray the Father and he will send you another Comforter, and he shall abide with you for ever. And thus earth has been the theatre of the Spirit's labours ever since. He strives with every man that he may bring men to the truth. He is the great agent in the conversion of souls, and a measure of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. He darts the light of truth into the sinner's mind, and shows him his own unworthiness, and then he leads him to look higher, that he may see the cross as well. He strives with men that he may bring men to the truth. There is not an individual here—I am bold to say it—who has not at some time or other felt his striving. He meets you in the closet, does he not—that is, if you ever go there. He meets you in the closet, and there in the secrecy of your spirit he uplifts your soul to heaven. He meets you in the sanctuary does he not, when the litanies of the people rise, and glad *Te Deums* are chanted; and there in the nearness of the worship he reveals to you the Father. He meets you in solitude, does he not, when the excitements of the world are hushed, when the storm is completely still, when there is no sound to distract the quietude of the soul as it opens itself before God. He meets you in company, does he not, and often amid the charms of society, and the festivities of gathered friends, thoughts of another world will intrude themselves. Clear piercing whispers that you know not how to still, will make themselves heard. My brethren, does he not meet you here? Does he not meet you now? Yes, in every sermon you hear, in every chapter you read, in every impression you feel, there is the influence of the Spirit, there is a living, vital, everlasting proof that God is not unmindful of man.

And then he is mindful too in the dispensations of his providence. The great end of man's existence in the present life, is to prepare for a better. He is so thoroughly earthly, so wedded to the scenes of time, that vigorous means are necessary in order to wean him from earth and attach him to the skies. It would save us from misery sometimes if we could only regard our afflictions as having this disciplining and corrective end. God is mindful of you when you think he has withdrawn his face, and turned aside his glance. Every affliction that causes you to feel as if the rapture of life had gone, and as if the funeral bell were tolling for all your past joys—every bereavement that desolates your dwelling and lacerates your heart—every pain that afflicts you, and every languor that enfeebles you, and every sickness that nauseates you—all are visitations in some sort of the Spirit. Oh how often has he spoken to you! Have you been one moment of your lives unvisited? Such and so constant is the mindfulness of God to man.

It were difficult just at the close of a discourse, to enter largely into the causes why God is mindful of man. If indeed we think how we are hemmed round with providence—how God leaves us free and yet binds our freedom—how God encompasses us just as the air wraps up and encompasses the great globe of our world; if we think of this we may well wonder why God should have been thus mindful of man. What is man? In magnitude

he is but a speck; the everlasting hills are bigger. He is a dwarf when he stands beside some object in nature. In duration—as to his conscious existence in this life—seventy, sixty, forty, twenty years—what is your life? “It is even as a vapour, which appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” What is man? An atom compared with the house in which he lives. Even that is an atom compared with the city of which it forms a part. That city is an atom compared with the country of which it is the metropolis; that country an atom compared with the continent to which it belongs; that continent an atom compared with the great globe; that globe an atom compared with the universe. “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

Look at him intellectually. Here some light perhaps breaks in upon the subject. He has an understanding that is capable of comprehending truth. He has a will—“a stern, tough, sinew,” as one of the old divines says, “the most rebellient and toughest sinew in the whole creation of God.” He has a will endowed with the mighty power of volition, by which he can accept or reject the offered mercy of the gospel. He has a memory that can live on the past—an imagination that can take in the future. He has qualities which may fit him if he be rightly disposed for extensive usefulness and for God-communion. But there is nothing in that. There is no intellectual quality in man that the devil has not, yet God has forgotten him—cast him out of heaven and out of his memory, exiled for ever in everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. And man is immortal too, you may say. Flung into existence he cannot get out of it again. He must live and live for ever. So the fallen angels were too! Why has God been mindful of man?

Ah, mystery beyond human comprehension.

“Grace by far transcends,
Or men or angel’s thought.”

The real cause of God’s mindfulness of man was that man repelled from him all that was comely and of good report in the universe. “Because ye were sinners Christ died for you.” We must go up and lose ourselves in the love of God—the mystery that passes all comprehension.

“Pity divine, in Jesu’s face,
We see, adore, and love.”

Brethren, how is it with you? Do you not think you should come to God, that your lives should be devoted to his service, and that your heart should be loyal to him? Do you not think that every rebel affection should be exterminated, and every unhallowed practise given up, and every sinful word be hushed, and every thought be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ? Is it too much that the God who has been so mindful of you continually—who has surrounded you every moment with his loving-kindness and tender mercy—is it too much that he should have your worthless hearts in return? He only asks for them to brighten them; to transform them into his own image; that he may make them shapely like the hearts of citizens of heaven? Is it too much? Is it a hard thing—is it an unreasonable exaction this? Brethren I call upon you this morning, by all that is lovely and of good report in your hope of heaven—by all that is earnest in the life that now is—by all that is valuable in that soul of yours that can never die—to yield yourself up as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable service.

THE
MOTHER'S MAGAZINE,
AND
FAMILY PREACHER.

Know this ark is charm'd
With incantations Pharaoh ne'er employed,
With spells that impious Egypt never knew;
With invocations to the living God,
It twisted every tender reed together,
And with a prayer did every osier weave.—Mrs. H. MOORE.

Mothers, above all other human agents, hold in their hand the momentous trust of moulding the intellect and the heart of successive generations.

If all women were the Christians they ought to be, how quickly would the world be filled with the knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ! The coming generation might live in a new earth, and celebrate the final triumphs of the cross.

LONDON:
J. PAUL, 1, CHAPTER HOUSE COURT,
NORTH SIDE OF ST. PAUL'S, AND PATERNOSTER ROW.

1862.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
SKETCHES AND ESSAYS:—		Filial Piety of Dr. Isaac Watts	39
A New Year's Enquiry	1	Fragment Basket	88
A Struggle with Diffidence	33	Family Failings	110
A Mother's Influence	38	Fragment Basket	108
A Mother's love	64	Family Importance	135
A Talk with the little ones about Jesus	101	Fathers and Mothers, Act in Unison	201
A Mother's Influence	107	Giving away a Child	13
A True Sketch	110	God bless my mother	62
A Chapter from the life of Madame Guyon	136	God's Designs in Trials	264
A Sensible Mother	138	Gotthold's Emblems	170
A Truth for Parents	140	Gentleness	216
A Letter to a Newly Married Couple	148	How Queen Victoria brings up her Children	2
A Mother's Influence	153	Health in Women	30
A Hint to Mothers	202	Hints to Parents	213
A Sketch of Susannah Arnold	220	How to Dispose of Care	217
Blind Bess; or Ask and Receive	55	I have none but God left now	6
Be Patient with the Little Ones	97	I leap from Joy to Joy	28
Big Words, and Small Ideas	252	Ill a Week and Died	98
Busy Here and There	225	Infant Training	172
Courage, Pious Mother!	29	Kind Words to Poor Mothers	240
Crooked spines in girls	77	Lying to Children	248
Curing Foolish Fears	228	Leigh Richmond's mother	81
Christian Motive	243	Letter a to Young Mother	198
Disobedience to Parents	56	Mrs. Wesley and her children	79
Don't Scold	83	Mrs. Knibb	8
Domestic Discipline.—By A. James	165	Mother, are the children safe?	32
Do You Pray with Your Child	227	Mrs. Jonathan Edwards	60
Dear Children	249	Maternal Influence	63
Encouragement to Christian Parents	25	Mothers and men	63
Evil company	64	Morning Cloud Religion	223
Educating Daughters	108	Making Provision for Children	237
Echoes of a Mother's Voice	126	Mothers in Israel—Mrs. Cecil	127
		Ministerial Recollections	261

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Never deceive Children . . .	51	The Lost Child . . .	189
Not at Home . . .	151	The School in the House . . .	203
Not Wrath, but Love . . .	152	The Two Bibles . . .	221
Occupation of Children . . .	53	The Casket of Jewels . . .	226
Parental Authority . . .	10	The Conversion of Children . . .	239
Parent and Child . . .	146	Training, the Apprenticeship of Life . . .	250
Peculiar Children . . .	155	Teach your children to be Courteous . . .	265
Progress; or the International Exhibition . . .	174	Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it . . .	271
Responsibility of Parents . . .	141	Ungodly Children . . .	130
Rain; or no Rain . . .	176	Ungodly Marriages . . .	78
Remarkable answer to prayer . . .	5	Was he a Hero . . .	267
Strength for the Weak . . .	200	Woman, her glory and greatness . . .	49
Strength for the Strong . . .	272	What is the Family . . .	132
Song of a Family . . .	134	Why Children die . . .	146
Truth! Truth! Truth! . . .	31	Youth and Old Age . . .	252
To Bereaved Parents . . .	35		
The last moments of Maria Theresa . . .	39		
The Invincibles of Common Life . . .	40		
The Maniac Mother . . .	73		
The wall of snow . . .	75		
The want of Christian example a fatal want . . .	76		
The correction of children . . .	85		
The Service of Patience . . .	99		
The Plucked Flower . . .	105		
The First-born . . .	125		
The Children's Page . . .	131		
The Atmosphere of Love . . .	144		
The Mother's Gift—a Bible . . .	168		
The Rod . . .	168		
The Law of Home . . .	174		

POETRY :—

A Hymn for Mothers . . .	204
Deal Gently with the Little Ones . . .	173
Gain . . .	242
Hymn for the New Year . . .	7
Himself hath done it . . .	16
My Mother . . .	100
Not Sighs, but Smiles . . .	247
Our Home Jewels . . .	179
Submission . . .	178
To a Bereaved Mother . . .	37
The Christian Household . . .	54
The Mother's grief . . .	59
The Family Altar . . .	106
To a Mother . . .	266

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

The sufficiency of God. By the Rev. W. Morley Punshon . . .	17
Goodness and Mercy. By the Rev. William Y. Rooker, M. A. . . .	41
Meditations on the Hartley Colliery Accident. By the Rev. T. Rowsell . . .	65
Christianity a religion of the heart. By the Rev. Issac M. Reeves, A.M. . . .	89
Man's part in the work of salvation. By Rev. George Hutchison. . . .	113
The Ascension and its Effects. By the Right Rev. Frederick Barker, D.D. . . .	157
Valedictory Sermon. By the Rev. J. W. Richardson . . .	181
The Flesh and the Spirit. By the Rev. J. J. West, M. A. . . .	205
The Gifts of Faith and Suffering, with Conflict. By the Rev. J. J. West, M.A. . . .	229
The Believer's True Defence. By the Rev. Henry Melvill, B.D. . . .	253
A few parting words. By the Rev. W. H. F. Robson . . .	273

Sketches and Essays.

A NEW YEAR'S ENQUIRY.

"Is it well with thee?"—2 Kings iv. 26.

DEAR READER,

He whose watchful eye slumbers not, whose powerful arm wearies not, whose loving heart changes not, addresses thee by his servant in the language of affectionate inquiry—"Is it well with thee?"

Let the question be pondered in the deep and silent recesses of thy heart, in the undisturbed moments of thy chamber, in the brief intervals of thy daily cares, that the reply be not in haste or without reflection.

Has thy soul been awakened to see and feel its sinfulness by nature and by practice, and its consequent need of a Saviour? Have thy sins been forgiven thee through faith in the perfect obedience and precious blood of the Lord Jesus? Does the Holy Spirit dwell in thee, and lead thee in the way everlasting? Are the promises of God's Word increasingly great and precious in thy esteem? Are trials met now with victorious faith, enabling thee to rise above adverse circumstances, and recognise the hand wise and loving which permits them? Does thy heart, when bowed down, utter the submissive response, *It is the Lord*? Art thou persuaded that although "*his leading varies, yet his love remains,*" and that he is able to keep thee from falling, and present thee faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy? Are thy nearest, dearest relations—husband, child, father, mother, brother, sister, as the case may be—fellow-workers with thee for Christ, fellow-pilgrims with thee to Zion, walking in truth, and in the good ways of the Lord?

If "*Yea, Lord,*" be thy response to these inquiries, then mayest thou reply, as did the great and good Shunammite, "*It is well!*" The experience of others will bear witness, *It is well!* (Eccl. viii. 12). The Lord's servants are commissioned to tell thee, *It is well!* (Isa. iii. 10). The Saviour himself bids thee be of good cheer, and assures thee, *It is well!* (John xvi. 33). Thy own heart shall

Mother's Magazine. January, 1862.

hear the gentle whisper and witness of the Spirit, It is well. (Rom. viii. 16, 17). A voice from heaven shall proclaim, concerning those who have gone before to rest with Jesus, It is well! (Rev. xiv. 13).—Amen.

While it is thine to walk by faith below,
 May all thy life its hallow'd power shew;
 Its holy fruits therein be seen and known,
 As those which spring from holy faith alone.
 May hope be thine in heavenly glory bright,
 With love that renders every burden light;
 Wisdom be thine to see thy Master's will,
 And strength his gracious pleasure to fulfil.
 Grace in the service of a gracious Lord,
 To find his joy, his honour, thy reward;
 Till days, and months, and years shall cease to roll,
 And higher service claims thy willing soul.

HOW QUEEN VICTORIA BRINGS UP HER CHILDREN.

A YOUNG woman, who was formerly one of the house-maids at Windsor, and left Her Majesty's service to marry, preserves a lively remembrance of the various incidents of her stay at the castle, and of the pranks of the little people, who are now growing up to do honour to their royal mother's training. Among other incidents of her residence at Windsor, Mary well remembers how, one morning she was busy cleaning the grate in Prince Albert's study, the bars of which she was in the act of blacking, when the door opened, and in tripped Princess Royal and Princess Alice, in white morning frocks, their hair very smooth and nice, and their hands very clean, just ready for their morning lessons. Mary happened to be rather late that day, and was brushing away at the grate with might and main, being rather fearful lest the Prince should make his appearance before she was done.

"Oh, Mary, Mary," cried the two children, coming up to her, "what are you doing?"

"I'm blacking the grate," replied Mary, "and I'm in a great hurry, for I'm afraid the Prince will be coming before I've done."

"Oh, Mary, now, there's a good Mary, let us help you brush the grate," cried the two children, stooping down, one on each side of her, and trying to get hold of the brushes. "Give us the brushes, Mary, and the lead, and let us help you. It will be such fun."

Mary begged them to go away, and not make her lose time; but somehow or other, though she did her best to keep her hold of the brushes, the little Princesses were too cunning for her, and tried to get possession of them. No sooner had they done so, than they dipped the brushes into the pot of black lead, and then, in a twinkling, smeared Mary's face all over with them, making her as black as a chimney-sweep; which feat being accomplished, they scampered out of the room in the greatest possible state of delight, leaving the poor housemaid beside herself with terror, as the Queen, who is a very early riser, might very probably meet her, if she left the room, and what would Her Majesty say at the sight of such a blackamoor?

While the poor girl in her fright was hesitating to go or stay, afraid of coming upon the Queen if she left the study, and equally afraid of seeing Prince Albert enter if she remained, the two children ran off as fast as they could toward the school-room, tittering with exultation at the thought of their *escapada*, when they suddenly met their governess, Miss H——d, who stopped them, and asked them what they were doing in that particular passage, at that hour?

"We are going to the school-room," answered the little Princesses.

"Very good, but where are you coming from?" At this awkward question, the children, looking uncomfortably conscious, held down their heads, but said nothing.

At this moment, who should appear at the same doorway but Her Majesty, who happened to be going to Prince Albert's study, supposing the Prince to be there, and wishing to speak to him.

"Why, what are the children doing here?" inquired the Queen, stopping at sight of the group.

"That, your Majesty," replied Miss H——d, "is just what I am trying to find out, but have not yet been able to discover."

"Where have you been?" asked the Queen of the children, much surprised at their evident embarrassment, and looking more closely, "and what are all those little black specks on your frocks and on your hands?" she continued, pursuing her investigation. "It is

very evident that you have been up to some mischief," said her Majesty, "and I insist upon your showing me at once where you have come from."

As her children have always seemed to know that their royal mama is not to be trifled with, they immediately led the way to the study, though very reluctantly, and in as great trepidation as was the poor housemaid herself, who heard what was going on, but could not escape, there being no other way from the study than the passage by which the Queen, led by the children, was advancing to the door, where one glance at the face of poor Mary, who was crying as she stood there trying to rub the lead off her face with her apron, revealed to the Queen the nature of the prank in which the little truants had been engaged.

"Don't cry, but go and wash your face," said the Queen, kindly, to the frightened servant. "You are not to blame because the Princesses have done wrong. You are two very naughty girls," she continued, turning to the children, as the housemaid left the room; "you have spoiled Mary's clothes, and you will therefore give her a new gown, and cap, and collar, which you will pay for out of your own money. And as you have behaved very ill and very rudely to the poor girl in blacking her face, you will both of you beg pardon for what you have done."

The children's footman was accordingly dispatched forthwith into the town, with instructions to purchase a new gown, cap, and collar for Mary; and as soon as these were brought up to the school-room, the two little Princesses were sent by the Queen to carry them to her, and to ask her pardon for the trick they had played upon her.

"Here, Mary," they cried, as they presented her with the things, "here is a new cap for you, and a collar, and a dress, and mama says there is quite enough for flounces. And we beg your pardon for putting the black lead on your face this morning."

And back they ran again to the school-room, declaring that they "did not in the least mind giving Mary the new cap, and collar, and dress, but they did not like to beg her pardon."

MANHOOD is the development of childhood; and as the occupations of children are preparatory to the works of men; so is the work of man preparatory to the employments of angels.

REMARKABLE ANSWER TO PRAYER.

A LADY was travelling with her young family and their governess to the sea. They used post horses with their own carriage. They had not gone many miles before she discovered that the cook, contrary to her orders, had filled all the pockets and every spare nook of the coach with provisions. She was very much annoyed, and the first time they stopped to change horses had everything turned into a hamper, and told the servant to give it away. The governess asked permission to go with the servant while the carriage was detained to see it properly given. A reluctant consent was obtained, and she hastened into the poorest part of the town that lay near the Inn. She had little time for any choice, so turning down a street she resolved to leave the hamper at the first clean looking house she came to. Passing several, she stopped at one with a snow-white curtain in a bright window. She knocked against the door, but receiving no answer, tried the latch and went in. A woman reduced by starvation or sickness to a mere skeleton was kneeling at a bedstead, which was the only article of furniture in the room. She looked languidly at the lady who without delay, emptied the hamper on the ground—ham, pork-pie, tongue, etc.

“I was told to give this away,” said she, “and as I know no one here I determined to leave it at the first clean house I came to.”

Instead of thanking or even answering her, the woman still on her knees raised her hands and said, “I thank thee, O my Father, thou knowest my need.”

A few minutes told her story. She had lost her husband after twenty weeks of fever. Nursing him had reduced her strength and devoured her substance. She was too weak to work, and had been compelled to part with all her goods, piece by piece, to pay her rent and obtain bread. “I knew I could work if I had meat to nourish me,” she said, “but where could I get it?—where!” she continued, “why from Him who sent it by you just as I was asking him to let me have some unless it was his blessed will that I should go to the workhouse.”

“O TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD, BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT TRUSTETH IN HIM.”—*Psalm xxxiv. 8.*

“I HAVE NONE BUT GOD LEFT NOW.”

“I HAVE none but God left!” said a poor widow, who had been freely pouring out her troubles to an aged friend. She was dressed in black, and had years on her brow, while her face had in it a mournful and anxious expression; but the relation of her sorrows seemed to give relief to her heart.

By the poor widow’s account, she had passed through deep waters of affliction, and endured, as she said, more than her “share of trouble.” One of her two children had been drowned, and the other was then in a lunatic asylum. She had lost her brother and sister, and only three weeks before had buried her husband, being left alone and in poverty. “All the day long,” said she, “I am grieving; and when I awake in the morning, my pillow is wet with tears. Everything seems to have melted away, and I have none but God left now.”

“None but God left now!” poor broken-hearted pilgrim. Knowest thou Him who is yet left to thee? Hast thou felt that God is good? Hast thou tasted that the Lord is gracious? If not, no wonder, then, thy trouble is heavier than thou canst bear. Hasten to Him with thy burden. “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord:” for then thy language will soon be, “Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication. The Lord is my strength and my shield: my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.” (Psalm xxviii. 6, 7.)

“None but God left now!” poor, desolate widow, “tossed with tempest, and not comforted.” He who has wounded thee can heal thee; and He who has bereaved thee, can be to thee more than a husband, and give thee a better heritage than that of sons and daughters. Full as thy cup is of sorrow, peace and joy may yet be thy portion, for the promise of the Redeemer is gone forth, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. xi. 28.)

“None but God left now!” poor poverty-stricken mourner. Knowest thou not that the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof; the silver and the gold, the beasts of the forest, and the cattle upon a thousand hills?

Thy desires are not so large as his possessions. There is nothing

that is good for thee that He cannot bestow. He can wipe the tears from thine eyes, bind up the bones which He has broken, change thy gloom into gladness, and fill thy mouth and thy heart with thanksgiving.

Up and be doing, broken-hearted pilgrim! Onward and upward, desolate widow! To thy home, poverty-stricken mourner! If thou hast God left, then hast thou more need to praise Him on an instrument of ten strings, than to hang thine harp on the willows. Go boldly to an ever-open throne of grace. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Matt. vii. 7.)

HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

ANOTHER year is gone! how swift
Time's rapid onward flight! [past,
Days, weeks, and months roll quickly
And disappear from sight!

And still as nearer we approach
The close of life's short day,
More rapidly the shadows fall
Upon her darken'd way.

O that we all may pause and ask
With contrite, lowly, fear,
What record will our bye-gone days
To God's tribunal bear?

Is Christ our only hope and trust?
His cross our single plea?
And has his Spirit taught our hearts
All sin to hate and flee?

Whom have we sought to love and serve?
Whose followers have we been?
What fruits of holiness and peace
Have in our lives been seen?

And for the mercies God bestows,
With such unsparing hand,
Have we the gratitude display'd
These countless gifts demand?

And have his chastenings severe—
Those proofs of faithful love—
Wean'd our affections from this world,
And drawn our hearts above?

Great God! thy Spirit now send forth,
Convince us all of sin,
And by thy love's constraining power,
Our hearts to Jesus win.

Forgive the past with all its guilt;
Thy mighty grace afford,
That henceforth we may seek thy praise,
In thought, and deed, and word.

And resting in thy faithful care,
May we with trustful heart,
Go forth to meet the joy or woe,
Thy wisdom shall impart.

No evil can our souls befall,
If we are only thine;
Thy presence makes the darkest cloud
With rays of glory shine.

Whate'er in this untrodden year
May yet unfolded lie,
Let it be "Christ" to us "to live"—
'Twill then be "gain" to die.

So shall we well prepared be
For all our God may send; [minds,
His peace shall keep our hearts and
His grace our steps attend.

And soon our years of conflict o'er,
Our joyful souls shall rise,
Our God and Saviour to adore
For ever in the skies?

MRS. KNIBB.

A SACRED mission is that of a mother. One which should be taken thankfully, reverently, as one of God's best gifts, of which he will one day require a strict account. He may have given many blessings to his handmaiden, her cup may have "run over" with mercy, and into her deep, sensitive heart much love may have accumulated; but, when this new joy comes, proudly and happily she rises into a higher, better existence—a new life has dawned upon her.

A life of intense responsibility. For to a very great extent, her child will be what she shall make him. Often we see whole families in character and disposition repeated copies of the mother. She teaches them life's first lessons, and she is responsible for the effect, good or bad, which these first lessons shall exert on the future life of the little one.

Blessed, thrice blessed, that mother whose heart, thrilling with unspeakable rapture as her infant nestles in her bosom, pours out its deep tide of tenderness and solicitude at the feet of Jesus, offering her beautiful gift to him who, when mothers of old did the same with theirs, "laid his hands upon them and blessed them." Happy the mother, who, mistrustful of her own purity and strength for such a holy charge, goes in her weakness to the Mighty, entreating his help.

Such a mother lived, and loved, and prayed at the commencement of the present century in the little town of Kettering, in Northamptonshire. God had given her two sons, and, in the humility which characterizes a true Christian, she besought wisdom and knowledge to train them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." She was a woman of extraordinary piety, living a life of nearness to the Saviour, sitting at his feet, and learning of him. And she asked for her boys, not human greatness or distinction, but an early knowledge of divine truth, and lives of devotion to its precepts. The first words she taught them to speak were the name of Jesus and some little hymns about him thus filling their minds at their very opening with seed which, watered by prayer, must bring forth fruit to eternal life.

Mrs. Knibb was also gifted with great intelligence, so she knew how to make her early lessons interesting and attractive to her children. She told them in pleasant, familiar words the great story

of the cross. They knew, long before they could read for themselves, the outlines of that holy life which, in after years, they so ably published. She impressed upon their little, wondering hearts the facts of that blessed child-life the Saviour lived, the miracles he performed, the things he said and suffered, until they were "familiar in their mouths as household words." Yet very careful was she that they should not be unmeaning words alone; every hymn they learnt, every prayer they uttered, was patiently and thoroughly explained. A faithful servant was she, who diligently improved the talents lent to her.

And the Master abundantly rewarded and honoured her. First her son Thomas, who had been taught with his brother in the Sunday school, went out early in life to Jamaica, devoted to the mission cause, bringing great joy and humble thankfulness to his mother's heart. A little while he laboured, sowing good seed, but very soon he was called to rest in the very midst of a large field of labour.

The news came home to his mother, whose stricken heart clung amid all her trials, to the Healer. She could say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord," for had he not made the early dead his servant? Henceforth heaven had a new attraction now that her eldest son was among the redeemed, already waving the victor's palm. And towards the rest which he enjoyed, she turned her longing eyes. A pang of regret might have passed through her when she thought of the good he might have done in the sphere now left vacant. But this was soon removed when William begged to be allowed to go and take his brother's place, carrying on the work he had but commenced. The Baptist Missionary Society accepted his offer, and he forthwith prepared to go.

When he had taken leave of his mother, when the last farewell had been spoken, the parting embrace given, and he was in the street walking away, she put her head out of the window, and called after him, "William! William! mind, William! I had rather hear that you had perished in the sea than that you had dishonoured the Society you go to serve!"

Noble woman! Parting from the son of her bosom, perhaps to see him no more in this world, and yet no weakness, no selfishness filled her heart—only an intense desire that he might serve the cause of good, and keep himself unspotted from the world. No

wonder that years after he said, "I never forgot those words—they were written on my heart."

He passed away from her sight, but only to be more fervently remembered in her prayers. His sea voyage, his entrance into the strange land, his loneliness and difficulties were all cheered by the thought of his praying mother. Jamaica was stained and polluted by the sins and horrors of slavery. He lifted his eloquent voice against it unceasingly. Much persecution followed, but it could not daunt him. He laboured unweariedly until he had the joy of seeing the bonds broken, the slaves free.

As an ambassador of the cross he was very successful. Thousands hearing the glad tidings from his lips believed and were saved. He was the pastor of a large and flourishing church. His earnest, manly style won all hearts, and God blessed him beyond many of his servants. How signally were his mother's prayers answered.

Years after he came to England, and stood by her grave, shedding tears of filial love. "Ah!" said he, "I wish my children were here to scatter flowers on her grave."

Honoured servant of God! Honoured mother! They have met where are no more partings now. How true is it of the Christian mother, "Her children rise up, and call her blessed."—*Marianne Farningham*.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

THE conduct of parents in not maintaining due authority over their children, is a very common and very serious evil: it opposes the gracious plan of Providence, disturbs the peace and good order of society, mars the comfort of home, and contributes in many instances to the present misery and everlasting ruin of those who ought to be as dear to them as their own souls.

God, in intrusting you with children, has given you an authority which you are not at liberty to lay down, and which you are bound to employ in curbing their strong passions; in breaking down their self-will; and bringing them to a docile and submissive frame of spirit. It is the first duty of a child to obey, and you are bound steadily to enforce it, from the earliest period of their lives, with mingled tenderness and faithfulness.

How is it, then, that children are so often undutiful and refrac

tory ; struggling for the mastery ; many times refusing to do what their parents bid them ; and, instead of honouring their father and their mother next to God himself, treating them with neglect, and rudeness, and scorn ? Surely in this matter there is a great fault amongst parents : they do not begin at the earliest age to oppose the self-will of their children, and they fail to establish that authority, and enforce that discipline, which are needful for the welfare and happiness of both parents and children.

Harshness and severity I am far from recommending ; but a proper authority over your children must at all events be maintained. I mean such an authority as that you should say to one, " Go," and he goeth ; and to another, " Do this," and he doeth it ; and this can be only acquired by steadiness and unbending resolution. If you correct them one moment and fondle them the next, they will soon disregard your threatenings and corrections, because they know, if they cry a little longer and a little louder, they shall certainly gain their point. Correct them as seldom as possible, and never in passion ; but fail not, when necessary, to correct them. " Correct thy son," says the inspired writer, " and he shall give thee rest : yea, he shall give delight to thy soul. The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Nay, God goes so far as to declare, that " he that spareth the rod, hateth his son : but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes." In a word, you must never suffer your children to get the better of you by frowardness and obstinacy ; and, though the matter in dispute be a trifle, still accustom them to obey from their earliest years. Thus brawls and contentions will be strangers to your houses. While you keep your places, your children will know theirs ; and by this due subordination, things will go on pleasantly and peaceably.

The Lord expects, moreover, not merely that you should bring your children under control, but that you should " train them up in the way they should go," that is, in his fear and admonition ; that you should guard them from sin and temptation. He expressly requires, that you should make them familiarly acquainted with his holy word, speaking of it when you are sitting in your house, or walking by the way, or lying down, or rising up.

Oh, how dearly did good old Eli pay for his excessive indulgence to his children ! He was the high priest of God, and pious himself ; but through partial affection he had failed to correct the evil pro-

pensities of his sons ; his rebukes had been too mild to be heeded by them ; their wickedness was not repressed with sufficient firmness. And hence he was visited by the divine displeasure in such an awful manner, as to make the ears of all who heard it tingle. His two abandoned sons, unrepenting and unpardoned, as far as we know, were both slain in one day ; he himself lived just to hear this, and that the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, and then he fell backwards and died ; leaving a salutary warning to others, to the end of time, how they prefer the humours of their children to the honour of God.

Imagine not, I pray you, that undue indulgence will be repaid by the gratitude and love of the children who are thus spoiled. A young man, whose disorderly and wicked life brought him to an untimely end, when he was about to suffer the just sentence of the law, desired to speak with his aged mother, who had come to the fatal spot, to take the last look of a son whom she had too fondly indulged, and had neglected to "chasten betimes while there was hope." But when she came near the dying man, he bitterly reproached her for her foolish fondness to him in his youth, for allowing him to have his own way, and for not checking his unruly passions, which by long indulgence had gained the mastery, and had led him through a course of violence and guilt, to a shameful and premature death.

With this sad scene let me contrast the dying bed of a sweet child, who had been trained in the ways of religion and truth by a parent kind but judiciously firm : and as she sunk to rest in peaceful reliance on her Saviour's merits and her Saviour's love, she affectionately thanked her beloved mother for all her tender care and kindness ; but added, (pray, mark her words!) "I THANK YOU MOST OF ALL FOR HAVING SUBDUED MY SELF WILL!"

— — —

AN ALL-IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN MARRIAGE — WHEN Philip Henry, the father of the celebrated Commentator, sought the hand of the only daughter and heiress of Mrs. Mathew in marriage, an objection was made by her father, who admitted he was a gentleman, a scholar, and an excellent Preacher ; but he was a stranger, and "they did not even know where he came from." "True," said the daughter, who had well weighed the excellent qualities and graces of the stranger, "but I know where he is going, and I should like to go with him : " and they walked life's pilgrimage together.

GIVING AWAY A CHILD.

ON board one of the lake steamers, bound for the far West, were an Irish family—husband, wife, and three children. They were evidently in very destitute circumstances; but the exceeding beauty of the children, two girls and a boy, was the admiration of their fellow-passengers. A lady, who had no children of her own, was desirous of adopting one of the little travellers, and made application to the father, through a friend, who gives the following touching, and, as we suppose, truthful account of the negotiation:—

“I proceeded,” he says, “immediately on my delicate diplomacy.” Finding my friend on deck, I thus opened the affair—

‘You are very poor.’

His answer was very characteristic.

‘Poor, sir!’ said he, ‘ay, if there’s a poorer man than me troublin’ the world, God pity both of uz, for we’d be about aquil.’

‘Then how do you manage to support your children?’

‘Is it support them, sir? Why I don’t support them any way; they get supported some way or other. It’ll be time enough for me to complain when they do.’

‘Would it be a relief to you to part with one of them?’

It was too sudden: he turned sharply around.

‘A what, sir?’ he cried, ‘a relief to part from my child? Would it be a relief to have the hands chopped from the body, or the heart torn out of my breast? A relief, indeed! God be good to us, what do you mane?’

‘You don’t understand me,’ I replied. ‘If, now, it were in one’s power to provide comfortably for one of your children, would you stand in the way of its interests?’

‘No, sir,’ said he; ‘the heavens knows that I would willingly cut the sunshine away from myself, that they might get all the warm of it; but tell us what you’re drawing at.’

I then told him that a lady had taken a fancy to have one of his children; and, if he would consent to it, it should be educated, and finally settled comfortably in life.

This threw him into a fit of gratulation. He scratched his head, and looked the very picture of bewilderment. The struggle between a father’s love and the child’s interest was evident and touching. At length he said:

‘O, murther, wouldn’t it be a great thing for the baby? But I must go and talk with Mary—that’s the mother of them; an it

wouldn't be right to be givin' away her children before her face and she to know nothing at all about it.'

'Away with you then,' said I, 'and bring me an answer back as soon as possible.'

In about half an hour, he returned, leading two of his children. His eyes were red and swollen, and his face pale from excitement and agitation.

'Well,' I inquired, 'what success?'

'Bedad, it was a hard struggle, sir,' said he. 'But I've been talking to Mary, an' she says, as it's for the child's good, maybe the heavens above will give us strength to bear it.'

'Very well, and which of them is it to be?'

'Faix, and I don't know, sir,' and he ran his eye dubiously over both. 'Here's little Norah—she's the oldest, an' won't need her mother so much; but then—O, tear an' aigers, it's myself that can't tell which I'd rather part with least; so take the first one that comes wid a blessing. There, sir,' and he handed over little Norah; turning back, he snatched her up in his arms, and gave her one long, hearty father's kiss, saying through his tears:—

'May God be good to him that's good to you, and them that offers you hurt or harm, may their souls never see St. Pether.'

Then, taking his other child by the hand, he walked away, leaving Norah with me.

I took her down to the cabin, and we thought the matter settled. It must be confessed, to my great indignation, however, in about an hour's time I saw my friend Pat at the window. As soon as he caught my eye, he began making signs for me to come out. I did so, and found that he had the other child in his arms.

'What's the matter, now?' I asked.

'Well, sir,' said he, 'I ask your pardon for troubling you about so foolish a thing as a child or two, but we're thinkin' that maybe it'd make no differ—you see, sir, I've been talkin' to Mary, an' she says she can't part with Norah, because the creature has a look ov me; but here's little Biddy, she's purtyer far, an' av you plase, sir, will you swap?'

'Certainly; whenever you like,' said I.

So he snatched up little Norah, as though it was some recovered treasure, and darted away with her, leaving little Biddy, who remained with us all night; but lo! the moment we entered the cabin in the morning, there was Pat making his mysterious signs

again at the window, and this time he had the youngest, a baby, in his arms.

‘What’s wrong now?’ I inquired.

‘Be the hokey fly, sir, an’ it’s meself that’s almost ashamed to tell ye. Ye see I’ve been talking to Mary, an’ she didn’t like to part with Norah, because she has a look ov me, an’ be me soul, I can’t part with Biddy, because she’s the model of her mother; but there’s little Pauden, sir. There’s a lump of a Christian for you, two years old, and not a day more; he’ll never be any trouble to anyone; for av he takes after his mother, he’ll have the brightest eye, an’ av he takes after his father, he’ll have a fine broad pair of shoulders to push his way through the world. Will you swap again, sir?’

‘With all my heart,’ said I; ‘it is all the same to me;’ and little Pauden was left with me.

‘Ha, ha,’ said I to myself, as I looked into his big, laughing eyes, ‘so the affair is settled at last.’

But it wasn’t; for ten minutes had scarcely elapsed, when Pat rushed into the cabin without sign or ceremony, and snatched up the baby, and said:

‘It’s no use; I’ve been talking to Mary, an’ we can’t do it. Look at him, sir; he’s the youngest an’ the best of the batch. You wouldn’t keep him from us. You see, sir, Norah has a look ov me, an’ Biddy has a look ov Mary; but be my soul, little Pauden has the mother’s eye, an’ my nose, an’ a little of both of uz all over. No, sir; we can bear hard fortune, starvation, and misery, but we can’t bear to part with our children, unless it be the will of heaven to take them from uz.’

THE SPIRIT OF EXPLORATION.—“We have all of us something of the spirit of exploration in us. When we arrive at a new place, we are not content to sit down and let its peculiarities come upon us by slow degrees; we must see it all at once, and examine every nook and corner before we can settle to any steady business. Probably all of us, at some time or other, while looking over the map of the world, and seeing there vast blank spaces marked with the one word ‘unexplored,’ have felt for a moment or so a keen desire to penetrate into them, to come upon new lands, new races, with new manners and customs, and to tread where no European has trodden before.”—*The Art of Doing our Best.*

HIMSELF HATH DONE IT.

ISAIAH XXXVIII. 15.

"HIMSELF hath done it" all.—O how those words
Should hush to silence every murmuring thought !
Himself hath done it—He who loves me best,
He who my soul with His own blood hath bought.

"Himself hath done it."—Can it then be aught
Than full of wisdom, full of tenderest love ?
Not *one* unneeded sorrow will He send,
To teach this wandering heart no more to rove.

"Himself hath done it."—Yes, although severe
May seem the stroke, and bitter be the cup,
'Tis His own hand that holds it, and I know
He'll give me grace to drink it meekly up.

"Himself hath done it."—O, no arm but His
Could e'er sustain beneath earth's dreary lot ;
But while I know He's doing all things well,
My heart His loving-kindness questions not.

"Himself hath done it."—He who's searched me through,
Sees how I cleave to earth's ensnaring ties ;
And so he breaks each reed on which my soul
Too much for happiness and joy relies.

"Himself hath done it."—He would have me see
What broken cisterns human friends must prove ;
That I may turn and quench my burning thirst
At His own fount of ever-living love.

"Himself hath done it."—Then I fain would say,
"Thy will in all things evermore be done ;"
E'en though that will remove whom best I love,
While Jesus lives I cannot be alone.

"Himself hath done it."—precious, precious words ;
"Himself," my Father, Saviour, Brother, Friend
Whose faithfulness no variation knows ;
Who, having loved me, loves me to the end.

And when, in His eternal presence blest,
I at His feet my crown immortal cast
I'll gladly own, with all his ransomed saints

"Himself hath done it"—all, from first to last.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF GOD.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH, 1861,

BY THE REV. W. MORLEY PUNSHON, M.A.

AT THE

WESLEYAN CHAPEL, ROSEBERRY PLACE, DALSTON.

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."—2 Corinthians iii. 5.

"Our sufficiency is of God." Yes, brethren, it is a blessed verity—one of the most encouraging and one of the most comprehensive truths in the Bible. The all-sufficiency of God may be styled the essence of all Christian experience; it is the moral which the Scriptures continually inculcate; it stands in the heraldry of heaven as the motto on the believer's arms. The all-sufficiency of God has been the support and comfort of the faithful in all ages of the Church; on this rock Abraham built his hope; to this refuge in all time of trouble the sweet singer of Israel fled; by this confidence the great apostle of the Gentiles was constantly and perseveringly upheld. The all-sufficiency of God gives strength to patience, gives solidity to hope, gives constancy to endurance, gives nerve and vitality to effort. The weakest believer with this sacred treasure in possession is enabled to go steadily forward, sacrificing no duty, resisting all sin, and amidst every terror and every humiliation feeling within him the still clear light of life. To this the most eminent saints are indebted for all that they enjoy, for all that they are enabled to perform, and though assailed by various foes without and by various fears within, by this they can return from every conflict bearing the spoils of victory; and as with the trophies of their triumph they erect the grateful Ebenezer, you may see this inscription written upon them all, "Having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day." Feeling most deeply the impotency of the nature they inherit, and penetrated with a sense of the difficulties by which they are surrounded, when faith is in exercise they will point to this as a never-failing source of strength, and in the course of their untiring and unswerving pilgrimage, this is their language, "Let the wise man trust in his wisdom, let the rich man glory in his wealth, let the proud man vaunt his own dignity, let the trifler make the world his defence, *we* dare not trust to such refuges of lies, *we* dare not build upon foundations which are so palpably insecure; we feel our own nothingness, but we feel our own might because 'our sufficiency is of God.'"

From the commencement of the chapter out of which these words are taken, you learn that the same exclusiveness of spirit existed in the days of Paul which exists in certain quarters now, and that the same charge—that of false apostleship, was brought against him which has since been preferred against many eminent ministers of Christ. It is no small consolation to us to find that we are thus unchurched in good company. The apostle, however, answers the accusation just as any man would do who had no particular interest to serve in surrounding a great question with a crowd of arguments anything but luminous. He appeals to the church amongst whom he had laboured, and asks their verdict as to his success as a minister. "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle"—your changed hearts, your holy lives, your transformed affections, your heavenly deportment—"ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink," nor with anything so fading, "but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone," nor on anything so hard, "but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we

The Family Preacher.

through Christ to God-ward." Then so anxious is he, even in this the moment of his triumphant vindication, to avoid all appearance of boasting, that he hastens to utter the immediate disclaimer, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves." All that has been done whether in us as the subjects, or by us as the instruments, has been done by the sovereign power of God, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

The apostle in these verses unfolds to us the great secret both of ministerial call and of ministerial efficiency. It is God, not man, that makes—nor finds—able ministers of the New Testament. There is the argument in a verse, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." The tones of his voice are heard, saying, "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard." And it is a remarkable fact, and one which we should never forget, that this voice is never heard in a heart where there is no faith; consequently, the prime qualification for the ministry of the Christian religion is a heart which has been melted by its love, and a conscience which has felt it in its power. Without this all else is unavailing; the attainment of the most profound and extensive knowledge, the grasp of the loftiest and most searching intellect, the possession of the most commanding eloquence, the treasures of the most imperial fancy, the research of the most accomplished scholar, all are useless, worse than useless, without the converting grace of God, just as the trappings which decorate the traitor, only make his treason the fouler, and they stand forth as the weapons of more terrible danger, and as the portent of more terrific and appalling ruin. There is not a minister within the compass of the Catholic Church, however eminent he may be, however signally his labours have been blessed, who has not reason to remember every moment of his ministerial career, "I am nothing, less than nothing, but my sufficiency is of God."

The comfortable and scriptural doctrine contained in these words is no more true of ministers, of whom they were immediately spoken, than of Christians in general, to whom they may be properly applied. The station is different, but the strength is the same; your sufficiency as well as ours is of God; and, taking the words in this extended sense, we may find in them matter for profitable meditation by reminding you for a moment, first of the nature of this sufficiency, and then of the authority which we have to expect this sufficiency for ourselves.

I. The sufficiency of God may be considered either as proper or communicative. By his proper sufficiency we mean that he is self-existent, self-sufficient, independently happy. Angels and men, animate and inanimate creatures, may declare they cannot increase his glory; it is eternal, underived, perfect. He has said that he will never give it to another. There was no necessity in his nature impelling him to create the universe. He could have existed alone. He did exist alone, before the everlasting silence had been broken by a human footstep, or interrupted by a human voice. And that Divine solitude, moreover, was a solitude of unruffled happiness. The best praises, therefore, the most extensive services of his worshippers, are but reflections of the glory which dwells originally in himself. It is, however, of the sufficiency of God in relation to his creatures that it is our province especially to speak, and in this sense God is "good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

He is sufficient, in the first place, for the preservation of the universe which his hands have made. From the sublime account which the Scriptures give us of creation, we learn that "the heavens were made by him, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." And as we know that nothing earthly has within it the power to sustain itself, we are further assured that he upholdeth all things by that same word of his power. It is by this ever-breathing word constantly in exercise that the sun shines, that the moon walks in brightness, that the stars pursue their courses in the sky. The clouds are marshalled by this Divine decree, and when he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens. Reason looks at this systematic and continuous regularity, and admires it, and refers it to the operation of second causes, and argues very philosophically about the nature and fitness of things. Piety looks through the complications of the mechanism of the Hand that formed it. The universe is to her but as one vast transparency through which she can gaze on God. Her pathway and her communion are on the high places of creation. There, far above all secondary and subordinate

agencies, she discovers the hidings of his power. The symmetry of nature is to her more beautiful, because God has produced it. The deep harmonies of the systems come more tunefully upon her ear, because the hand of the Lord has wakened them.

"What though no real voice or sound,
Amid the radiant orbs be found;
In faith's quick ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a noble voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
He who sustains us is Divine."

And what a contemplation is thus opened out to us of the majesty and of the power of God! Who can understand it? The planets are kept in their orbits, the seasons continually alternate, old ocean comes every day and lashes himself upon the shore, and every day finds "Hitherto" written upon the sand, and the mad surge respects it. The earth yields her increase, vegetable life is evolved, circulation takes place throughout the animal system, and man walks and learns. All these diverse operations produced at one and the same moment, perpetuated from one moment to another, by the simple word of God. Who can understand it?

Extend your conceptions still further; take hold of the far reaching discoveries of astronomy; glance at the numberless suns and systems which are scattered in the broad field of immensity; remember for there is no Scripture against it, and probabilities are strongly in favour of the opinion, that they are all inhabited, and inhabited by dependent creatures somewhat similar to yourselves. Glance at the almost infinite variety of existence with which we are acquainted whether we walk the earth, or cleave the air, or swim the sea; connect with all this the Scriptural announcement that these are but parts of his ways. How thought shrinks from the aggregate! How the brain recoils from the contemplation of the sum, and we may well finish the quotation, and say, "The thunder of his power, who can withstand it?" All our reasonings upon the subject only serve to demonstrate that man by searching cannot find out God. Could we with the swiftness of a sunbeam dart ourselves in a moment beyond the limits of the known creation, and for ages upon ages continue our pilgrimage in infinite space, we should never (grasp the thought if you can), never, never, never be able to reach a place where God is not, never light upon a spot where this glorious Being is not essentially and influentially present. The whole universe is one vast laboratory of benevolent art, over every department of which this Deity presides; a sanctuary, every part of which this Divinity inhabits—a circle, whose circumference is unfathomed, but whose every section is filled with God.

But secondly and chiefly, He is sufficient for the preservation and for the perpetuity of the Gospel plan in the salvation and ultimate happiness of every individual believer. Christianity is not to be viewed by us merely as a moral system, that we are to rank on a level with the speculations of Confucius, and Socrates, and others. It is something more, it is a course of Divine operations. We are not to regard it as a mere statement of doctrine made known to us in a bundle of books, we must remember the Divine agency by which it is always conducted and inspired. We observed before, that no mere man has a power to produce an abiding change upon the hearts of his hearers. Human eloquence is a mighty thing I know; human reasoning is a persuasive and powerful thing, I know; and under certain circumstances and under favourable conditions of advantage they can accomplish great results. They can charm a Herod, they can make a Felix tremble, they can almost persuade an Agrippa to become a Christian; but they can do no more. I know that immense multitudes have been swayed sometimes by the power of a single tongue. The passions can be excited either to madness or sympathy, either to deeds of lawless aggression or deeds of high emprise; but then there is only a transient mastery obtained. We read of a harp in the classic fables of old, which, when the wind swept it, was said to discourse eloquent strains, but then unhappily the breeze and the music died away together. So it is with the triumph of the orator; the moment the voice of the speaker ceases, the spell is broken, the dream is dissipated, reflection begins to remonstrate against excitement, and the whole affair is forgotten, or comes upon the soul only as the memory of some pleasant song. No; truth, inanimate truth, can produce no abiding change. Pardon and sanctification are not the necessary consequences of statement of doctrine. Scripture cannot produce them. The truth in y appear in all its cogency and all its power before the mind; it may appear so closely as to extort from the unwilling

spirit an acquiescence in what it propounds; but it is uninfluential, it lacks energy, it lacks a self-appliant power. It may enlighten, that is its province, it can never save; without the Spirit it is useless; let the Spirit animate it, and it has the power of God. Hearers who sit under the ministration of the truth without the Spirit may be likened to a man standing upon the brow of a hill, which commands the prospect of an extensive landscape. The varied beauties of field and dell are before him; nature is clad in her richest livery; there is every variety calculated to interest and inspire. Rugged rocks frown as if they were keeping sentinel over the sleeping valley; the earth yields her increase; the crystal streamlet leaps merrily along; impressions of the beautiful are visible everywhere.

There is just one drawback to the picture, and that drawback is, that the man who stands upon the summit of the hill is blind. That is just the state of the case in reference to the truth that there is in the Bible. The truth is there, in all its grandeur, and in all its power, but the man has no eyes to see it. Only let the Spirit come, shred the scales away, take off the spiritual ophthalmia, and he sees the landscape stretching before him, in all its hues of beauty, and his soul is elevated, and he enters into the fullest rapture of the scene. Prevailing truth, therefore, is not of the letter, but of the Spirit; "for the letter killeth,"—is inoperative, cannot profit, cannot be discerned; "but the Spirit giveth life." It is this Spirit which is promised by God for the carrying out of the gospel, and it therefore must be successful.

Here, again, we know that there will be considerable difficulties about the mode of procedure. God's word must be fulfilled, that is one thing; man's freedom must be maintained, that is another thing. How are these two to be reconciled? Man is a moral agent, and God has endowed him with talents, and invested him with an immense delegation of power in the distribution of those talents, in the exercise of that power. He has said, in fact, "Let him alone; he may do just as he lists." He is allowed for the present to act as if he had no superior; but for all he is holden finally and most strictly responsible. One of our most eloquent senators once said, that an Englishman's cottage was his castle; that the winds may whistle through every crevice, and rains penetrate through every cranny, but into that cottage the monarch dare not enter against the cotter's will. That is just the state of the case in the covenant into which God has entered with us, between Christ and the human soul. He has got such a respect for the will of the immortal tenant that he has placed within us, that He will never force an entrance. He will do everything else; He will stand at the door.

"He now stands knocking at the door
Of every sinner's heart;
The worst need keep him out no more,
Nor force him to depart."

But he will not compel an entrance; and many a time when the coercion is not applied, and force cannot be made use of, he turns away regretfully, saying, "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life."

But notwithstanding all this formidable opposition, the Gospel *shall* triumph. We can conceive of no enemies more subtle, more malignant, more powerful than those it has already encountered and vanquished. Memory cheers us onward, and bids Hope to smile. God is with the Gospel—that is the great secret of its success, after all. She does not trust in her inherent energy; she does not trust in her exquisite adaptation to the wants of men; she does not trust in the indefatigable and self-denying labours of her ministers. God is with the Gospel; and under his guidance she shall march triumphantly forward subjugating every enemy, acquiring a lodgment in every heart, reclaiming the world unto herself, until she is consummated amid the ecstasies of a renovated universe, in the deep and solemn moment when the Son, who gave his life a ransom for all, "shall see of the travail of his soul, and be," benevolently, "satisfied." And oh! dear brethren, what a comfortable doctrine is this! Cannot you go on with the reasoning in your own minds? If this Gospel is thus to be conducted from step to step in its progressive march to triumph, I shall share surely in its succours and salvation by the way. It guarantees individual salvation, and individual defence. Thou, this morning, in the sanctuary, timid and discouraged believer, shrinking back at the sight of the perils of climbing the Hill Difficulty; or afraid as thou hearest the roar of the lions in front of the Palace Beautiful; lift up thy head; be not discouraged; thy sufficiency is of God. What frightens thee—affliction? God is thy health. Persecution? God is thy crown. Perplexity? God is thy counsel. Death? God

is thine everlasting life. Only trust in God, and all shall be well; life shall glide thee into death, and death shall glide thee into heaven. "Who," asks the exulting apostle, in the 8th of Romans, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay," as if these things were hardly to be named at all, "nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors." Oh! the royalty of the language! It is not a drawn battle; night does not come on to separate the combatants; we have not to send a herald, after the manner of ancient warfare, to ask permission to bury our dead; we do not come away from the field, with the armour backed and scarred, and the dishonoured banner trailing after us in the dust, making it doubtful whether we have won the victory or not. "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death," he puts that first because it is that generally that frightens believers most, therefore he hastens to dissipate their uttermost fear at the beginning—"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life," with its ambuscades, and temptations, and hazards, and pitfalls, really if men knew it a great deal more perilous than death—"Nor angels," if any of them could forget himself so far as to come upon an errand of mischief, and preach "another gospel," and try to seduce the very elect themselves; "Nor principalities nor powers," although the great father of lies may plant his most formidable host, and marshal his choicest batteries against us; "Nor things present," though those things present may include "famine, and nakedness, and perils, and sword;" "Nor things to come," though in those things to come may be wrapt up gigantic blasphemies and an originality of Diabolism never dreamed of yet; "No creature," nothing but sin, and that is not a creature, something that God never made, a foul excrescence and abortion upon the universe of God—"No creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Oh! the blessedness of being in this love of God, the blessedness of an approving conscience, the blessedness of increasing knowledge, the blessedness of completest victory, the blessedness of gospel peace, the blessedness of perfect love. I do not know what that "sea of glass" means, about which we read in the Revelation. I do not pretend to an intimate acquaintance with those mysterious disclosures; but I know nothing which can better image the deep, serene, reposing, rapture of the spirit that has finished its course with joy. It is a "sea of glass;" it has no billows, not a breath ever by any possibility ruffles it, and on this sea of glass, as on a wide and waveless ocean, the believer stands for ever, chanting eternally the song of Moses and the Lamb. Oh! lift up your heads and come back to Zion with singing and let this be the burden of your song,—

"Let doubt, then, and danger
My progress oppose;
They only make heaven
More sweet at the close.
Afflictions may damp me,
They cannot destroy;

For one glimpse of his love
Turns them all into joy.
Come joy or come sorrow,
Whate'er may befall,
One hour with my God
Will make up for it all."

"Our sufficiency is of God." Well, but after all, it were but of little use our talking in this strain to you, if you were to find out that it was some aristocratic blessing, some blessing that was kept for the peerage of the faithful, for the favoured ones only among the family of the King of kings.

II. Let us look, then, for a moment at the authority which believers have to expect this sufficiency for themselves. And, very briefly, we have a right to expect it, because it is found and promised in the Bible. Every believer, the moment he, becomes a believer, becomes an inheritor of the promises.

It is not my Bible this, it is not your Bible this, it is our Bible, it is common property, it belongs to the universal church. We have no sympathy of course with those who would monopolize this sacred treasure, keep this light of the Gospel burning, and that with a precious dimness, only in the study of the priest, or fettered as it used to be like a curiosity to the altars of the churches. Thank God, these days of darkness are gone by for ever; and yet there is a church somewhere, professedly Christian, which denies to its members the light and comfort of the Bible in their own tongue, thus most absolutely "exalting itself against all that is called God." Oh most foul corruption! Deprive us of the Bible! As well forbid us to gaze upon the jewelled sky or to be fanned by the wind and searching air. Deprive us of the Bible! Call it a sin for us to look at the sun, and to bask in the blaze of his enlivening beams! The very same Hand that launched yon orb on the ocean of life,

and bade him shine upon the evil and the good, has sent this orb into the world; and has sent it on purpose that it may be a light to all our feet and a lantern to all our paths. We devoutly thank the good Spirit of the Lord that He put it into the hearts of our forefathers to protest against so flagrant and monstrous an impiety. We cannot afford to be thus robbed of our birthright, to be thus cheated of our inheritance, to be thus basely swindled out of the possession of the book of God. It is the legacy of the apostle's labour, the bulwark of the confessor's faith, the purchase of the martyr's blood. Thank God! we have the Bible in possession; let us prove that we love it by drawing from it all the encouragement which its heaven-inspired pages are calculated to afford, and by cleaving to it in intensity of attachment and affection which all the efforts of scoffers and traitors will never be able to disturb.

We say then, we have a right to expect this sufficiency, because it is promised in the Bible. We gather it from the declarations of Scripture. Listen to them, you that are in Christ—listen to them; they are yours. "Thus saith the Lord, who created thee, O Jacob, and formed thee, O Israel; fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name." Oh what a beautiful thought that is! How many believers were there, that in the early ages of the world, in the patriarchal and Levitical times, went up by faith in a Saviour to come! How many thousands upon thousands have listened to apostolic teaching, and rejoiced in the gladness and the beauty of the new covenant! How many thousands upon thousands in all succeeding ages have there been, who have participated in the same hope, and enjoyed the same immunity from sin! How many thousands upon thousands are there now upon the earth working out their salvation with fear and trembling! How many thousands upon thousands shall come into the Church in that day of its millennial fulness, when the gates of it shall not be shut day nor night, because the porter shall have no chance of shutting them, the people shall crowd in so fast! Now think of all this mass of regenerate mind, believers past, believers present, believers future, and then come and hear God saying, "I have called thee by thy name," to every one out of that mass. "I have called thee by thy name. Thou art not lost in the crowd. I did not know thee simply as a believer in Jesus. I know all about thee, and could at any moment call thee by thy name. Tell the world the story of the fears from which thou hast been delivered, and what struggles thou hast made against evil, and of all the hope and joy that have made thy path jubilant and glad. I have called thee by thy name. Thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; through the rivers"—deeper than the waters—"they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." "The Lord God is a sun and a shield," light and defence: we do not want much more in our passage. "He will give grace and glory;" and if any of you are so perversely clever, so mischievously ingenious in multiplying arguments in favour of your own despair, that you can think of some blessing that is not wrapped up either in grace or glory, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "Fear not. I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. Cast all thy care upon me, for I care for thee."

Are you still dissatisfied? God condescends to expostulate with you upon your unbelief. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hidden from the Lord?" How often have you said that! How many times in the time of your grief and sorrow have you said that, "my way is hidden from the Lord; my judgment is passed over from my God." "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint;" He does not merely take his swoon away; he makes him strong. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Are you still distrustful? Cannot those rebel hearts of yours bring themselves to calm and childlike submission yet? God knows our nature, and he knows how much better a teacher example is than precept and counsel, and, sparkling upon the pages of the inspired Word, we have instance after instance of his interposition on behalf of his saints.

Abraham rises early in the morning, and goes a three days' journey with the son of his love, intending all the while to offer him in sacrifice to the God of heaven. Arrived at their place of destination, the altar is prepared, the victim bound, the knife lifted. There can be no escape then, surely! But the ram is caught in the

thicket by his horns, for man's extremity is God's opportunity, and the child of Abraham lives. There are the children of Israel brought to the borders of the Red Sea, hotly pursued by the flower of the Egyptian army. Troops are close upon them in the rear, the Red Sea rolls frowning before them, the inaccessible summits of Baal-Zephon tower on the right hand and on the left—what are they to do? There seems no possible chance of escape. But what are laws of gravitation, I wonder, when the Lord is to work for his people? He who made them can alter them at his pleasure. So the waters erect themselves on either hand, and the bed of the ocean is their triumphant pathway. God's grace is sufficient. There is Nehemiah, like a true-hearted patriot as he was, sets to work building the dilapidated wall of Jerusalem; but he begins in troublous times. Sanballat and Tobiah come up to fight against the workmen, and they are so hard bested, that they have to work with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other. What of that? God's grace is sufficient, and the second Jerusalem rose in majesty upon the site and ruins of the first.

But you are not satisfied yet. You say, "Those are all instances taken from the Old Testament times. The age of miracles is over now; we are not now to expect any such interposition on behalf of God's people." Well, come out of the light of Scripture a little into the light of common life. Tread softly as you enter that house, for it is the house of mourning. A large family surround the bed-side of the dying parent. That man is a Christian, and knowing in whom he has believed, he is not afraid to die. But he has a large family, and the thought that he will leave them without a protector, the thought of the forcible disruption of social ties, pressed upon his spirit somewhat; and when you look at him, there is a shade of sadness upon his countenance. But you gaze awhile, and you see that shade is chased away by a smile. What has wrought the change? What! why, a ministering angel whispered him, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive." He hails the promiser; faith cries out, "'Tis he! 'tis he! my God is present here." He enjoys rapt and high communion with celestial visitants, and thus the chamber of death becomes the gate of heaven.

You pass by the house next morning, and the half closed shutter and the drawn blinds tell you that he was, and is not. You enter, the widow is sitting in sorrow. The first deep pang is scarcely over; the tones of her husband's voice, of that voice with which she has been so long familiar, rush with all the freshness of yesterday upon her soul. She is worn with weeping. But she too is a Christian, and she flies to the Christian refuge, and her eye traces these comfortable words, "Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name." It is a dark hour, it has been a dark day, and the darkness has gathered and deepened, as the twilight came on, but now at eventime there shall be light, because her sufficiency is of God. You pass by the house again when about a week has elapsed. The last sad rites have been performed; the funeral bell, with its suppressed and heavy ominous sound, like the dividing asunder of soul and body, has tolled, and the very clay of her husband has been rent from her embrace. He has died in somewhat straitened circumstances; he was the sole dependence of the family, and with aching head and throbbing heart she sits down to seek about her for their subsistence. Her heart begins to fail her, but before she gives way to despair, she consults a friend; he is a wise man, that friend, one upon whose heart the influences of the blessed Spirit have operated long, and he gives her his testimony founded upon mature observation, and a long life experience. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread." Dashing away the tears that have blinded her, she struggles on and labours on, and feels that though it is her darkest hour, her sufficiency is still of God.

And this is no uncommon case. We have not drawn largely upon the extravagance of fancy to bring it out. We could go into hundreds of our sanctuaries, and bid you listen to one man as, with glad heart and free, he carols out the converted sinner's anthem, "O Lord, I will praise Thee; Thou wast angry with me, but Thine anger is turned away, and now Thou comfortest me." And then we could bid you listen to the experience of another, uttering, stammering, hesitating, "I was brought low, but He helped me, and brought me up again even from the very gates of death." And then we could point you to a third, and say, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." And where are the damnatory clauses that forbids you to partake of these benefits?

What statute of limitation is there that bars you from the heritage of this grace Divine? Oh, stretch out your hands to-day! Come and realise your own inheritance, and if you are in Christ, rejoice with exceeding joy, because your sufficiency is of God.

Is your sufficiency of God? Then it will animate you in trial. It will not relieve you in every trial. We need a great deal more strength when the body is weary, and the day dark, with duty yet to be done, under the pressure of difficulties—than we do at other times. God does not promise to relieve you from the pressure of trials. You dream that the course of a pilgrim to heaven will be bright as the summer, and glad as the morning.

“God shows you the path, 'tis dark and uneven,
All rugged with rock, all tangled with thorn;
You dream of celestial reward and renown,
You ask for the triumph that blesses the brave,
You ask for the palm branch, the robe, and the crown,
You ask, and He shows you a cross and a grave.”

It is through much tribulation that you must enter the kingdom. But if the sufficiency is of God, it will sustain you in trial, it will shew you the achievement through the sharp process, the lacerating pilgrimage, the terrible pang. We learn lessons of time when the head is low, just as when the sun is set, the stars come out in their blessed beauty, and darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day, and we should never have known they were there if the darkness had not come. So in the night of providential affliction, and bereavement, and calamity, the stars of God's great promise come shining out one by one upon the mind, and we rejoice in them and go on our way rejoicing. Or changing the figure, in the glad summer time, when the leaves are on the trees, we go into the woodlands and we sport among their branches. They arch over us above, their leaves so long and glossy, that they keep out the sky, and we forget that there is another world, and revel in the beauty and blessedness of this. But the blasts of winter come and scatter the leaves; then the light of Heaven comes in between, and we feel “we have here no continuing city,” and are urged to seek that which is to come. Oh stretch out your heart and grasp the heritage of God's sufficiency, and then trial, God's alchemist of old, shall purge away the dross, and mould, and leave you rich with gems and gold. Is your sufficiency of God? then you will be animated to duty. “Unto me who am less than the least of all saints,” there is humility; “I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me,” there is confidence. Yet they came from the same lips—that humility as of a child, that confidence as of a hero—they came from the same lips, but in the one case he rested upon his own strength, and in the other case he took hold upon the sufficiency of God.

What is there that you cannot accomplish if you take hold of the sufficiency of God? What is there too mighty for your achievement if you take hold of the sufficiency of God? Oh! only stretch out your hands, and in prayerful dependence upon Christ, take hold of His strength, and you can accomplish wonders; you can make Aceldama grow up into a paradise, you can make “one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight;” you can scatter the demons of superstition, ignorance, intemperance, and sin; you can witness for Christ with a power and energy which the most evil disposed amongst your adversaries shall not be able to resist or gainsay. Brethren, there is a mighty duty before you, there is a mission for each one of you to perform. Each one of you has some influence which you are called upon to use for Christ. Oh! take hold of God's sufficiency, and then in His strength go forward to the conquest of the world.

Sinner, thou hast straggled perhaps into the sanctuary this morning. Is there a lesson for thee? Thou art looking into thyself and thinking “He has forgotten me; there is no word of rebuke, there is no word of warning for me.” Is not there? Stop a little; there is a lesson for thee in the subject; there is a sufficiency in God to punish, a sufficiency of power and a sufficiency of will. Oh, do not plume thyself that He is too good to punish thee; He is too good not to punish thee if thou continuest in thine impenitence. Do not plume thyself that He is unable to punish thee. “Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth, but woe unto the man that striveth with his Maker.” There is a sufficiency of God. But, thank God, I would not leave thee with a barb in thy heart without giving an ointment to staunch it with. There is a sufficiency in Christ to save. “Wherefore He is able to save unto the uttermost,”—to the uttermost of human guilt, to the uttermost of human life, and to the uttermost of human time.

Sketches and Essays.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO CHRISTIAN PARENTS.

WHAT do the Scriptures teach Christian parents to aim at and expect as regards their children? This question we propose briefly to investigate in the present paper. Every one must acknowledge the vast importance of this subject. 'Among the innumerable connections which exist in the world between mind and mind, there is not one which exhibits more influence on the one side and more dependence on the other, than that which binds the parent to the child.' How deep the responsibility connected with this relationship! Who can tell how long and how far such influences will be extended? From Christians in this respect, as in all others, much is required, because to them much is given.

It may, we think, be asserted with confidence, that our influence will be good just in proportion as we honestly aim at what is right, and prayerfully hope for God's blessing. We shall endeavour to apply this principle to the question, What Christian parents should aim at and expect as regards their children. If we, as parents, would aim aright, we must consider well the precepts of God's Word bearing on this relationship. If we would hope so as not to be ashamed, we must rest on divine promises which bear on this case, and expect God to deal with us according to them. There is a third point contained in God's Word which we should study in connection with these two. The examples furnished should be diligently pondered, if we would have rightly to do with the precepts and promises.

What hath God said in a way of precept and counsel to godly parents? or, What do the Scriptures teach them to aim at as regards their children? God legislates for families as well as for the church. He has claims on individuals, not only as regards the state of the thoughts and feelings towards himself, but with reference to the several relationships in which he has placed them. 'Religion (says one) means a system of obligations, of binding of man to God, and of man to man, the bonds of which are the ordinances of God's

The Mother's Magazine. February, 1862.

appointment; and every individual is religious or otherwise, according as he sees God in the sphere in which he is moving, and fulfils to him the purpose for which he was placed in it. When God places any man at the head of a family, does he not say by such a step, I constitute you as the trustee, the guide, the guardian of this part of mankind; all under the roof are your charge, and to you entrusted? Now, for what end? to be ruled or not; to be instructed or not; to be, by your example and your precept, allured towards heaven or not? The negative in such cases is not merely monstrous, it is profane.' Well may parents, feeling their responsibility, knowing their weakness, and awake to the consequences of failure, cry out, 'Show us what we shall do to the child.' And God does show us. Let us attend to his teachings, and lay up his words in our hearts.

We shall do well to study the prohibitions and precepts addressed to parents. There are special warnings against two things, viz., false tenderness and undue severity. Some parents are prone to one extreme, and some to another; and not a few, it may be, err on both sides, by turns neglecting the narrow way between the two. False tenderness is real cruelty. 'A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame:' therefore parents are commanded wisely and calmly to chasten their children. (Prov. xix. 18; Heb. xii. 9). The prevention of future guilt, and not the gratification of a feeling of displeasure, should be the motive. Never punish when a child has not done intentionally wrong. He who can punish without sympathy—without emotion of sorrow—can never punish in a right spirit. For lack of this sympathy, the spirit of a child is sometimes crushed, or else rendered obdurate; while, in either case, its affections are alienated from the erring parent. What wisdom—what a deep knowledge of the heart and of human society—do the following words discover: 'Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.' (Coloss. iii. 21.) The will of the child must be made subservient to that of the parent. The very first lesson taught must be obedience, and it can scarcely be begun too early; but the parent should see to it that his requirements are just, and that they are enforced in a proper spirit. It is most important, also, that both parents should be agreed. One great obstacle to governing a family is a want of self-control, resolution, and harmony on the part of parents. Sincerity also, and straightforwardness, should be ever

found in the conduct of parents towards their children. 'Let compulsion be resorted to when necessary, but deception never. We must be what we wish our children to be: they will, in a great measure, form their characters from ours.'

Parents who walk before their children consistently, and who desire to act toward them as in the sight of God, will be able, with a good conscience, and in dependence on divine aid, to carry out the precepts of God's Word. We can only refer to a few of these. Prominent among them stand the well-known words, 'Train up a child in the way he should go.' The word 'train' signifies 'to draw along by a regular and steady course of exertion; or drawing from one act on to another by persuasion, promises, and other efforts continually repeated.' 'Train up, instruct, catechize, or initiate a child in the way he should go; or in the beginning of his way, at the mouth of it, as soon as he is capable of instruction; or according to his way, that is, according to his capacity or ability.' 'In the way he should go, as opposed to the way he would go.' 'To counteract selfishness, that inborn inbred mischief, I hold (says Hannah More) to be the great art of education.' There is very much deep meaning and important teaching in that word 'train.' It shows us that a little must be done at a time, and that very often. The figure of a tree naturally suggests itself. As the young branches shoot forth, they are to be trained. The tendrils of the soul must not be left alone: they must be handled tenderly so as not to be crushed; and wisely, so that they may not go wrong. 'Train up,' still up towards heaven, sunlight evermore directing to heavenly facts and principles and, above all, to the one gracious Saviour and perfect pattern. Or we might refer to the training of a soldier or disciple: all these illustrate what wisdom, watchfulness, and perseverance are implied; and how much wiser are many in their generation in training plants or animals, or soldiers or scholars, than Christian parents are in training up their children 'in the way they should go.'

A similar precept is found in the New Testament: 'Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' (Ephes. vi. 4). The word 'nurture' here means also the training of a child. Hence education, instruction, discipline. Train up children in such a way as the Lord approves. 'Admonition' means, literally, putting in mind. Put them in mind of the Lord—of his existence, perfections, laws, claims, etc. Bengel observes: 'Bring them up, kindly, in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord. The one of these obviates ignorance, the other forgetfulness and levity. Both include the word and all other training. Eli "did not admonish his sons." In this text, as well as the former, a very early beginning is called for: 'Bring them up.' Lose no time with them. A mother once asked a clergyman when she should begin the education of her child, which, she told him, was then four years old. 'Madam,' was the reply, 'you have lost more than three years already.' From the very smile that gleams over an infant's cheek your opportunity begins. Alas! how few of us have the perseverance, the self-denial, and faith necessary for such a work! Yet there have been those who have found such a duty their delight, and surely they have had their reward. Oh! it is a blessed thing to be able to write privilege where God writes duty.—*Christian Treasury*.

I LEAP FROM JOY TO JOY.

THE WIDOW'S POVERTY.

ONE bitterly cold afternoon in February, I went to visit seventeen of my very poor people; and after a rather sad time, on account of their extreme poverty and the intensity of the cold, I came to a poor widow, who had once crept out to my mother's meeting.

I found her in a back-kitchen, which once was used for a wash-house. The pavement of the backyard came nearly to the top of the window, and so obscured the light, that I could at first see nothing but a speck of fire in one corner of the room. A large bedstead filled the tiny place, so that it was hardly possible to get in.

I groped my way towards the fire, and when near enough to hear the feeble tones of the inhabitant of this dark abode, I only recognized her voice, for I could not distinguish her features. She was sadly bent with pain, from rheumatism, and had also bronchitis, which hardly allowed her to speak; but I will give you the substance of her answers to my questions, spoken in short, interrupted sentences.

"It is Miss G——'s voice—I know it; oh, how good God is!"

"I have only the bit of fire you see in the grate, and I was just praying to him to send me help; for you see the damp on the walls."

I looked, and the walls were damp, and, in places, wet to the touch, from the ground nearly up to the ceiling.

I asked how she lived.

"They won't allow me anything from the house, because I'm not old enough, but they will take me in ; and I would go, as far as I am concerned, but what would become of my three little children? The youngest depends on me—he is only seven ; the two others have each got a little place ; the little girl (only nine) nurses a baby, and her mistress likes her so much, that she has taken her into her house altogether, but I wash and mend her bits of things every week ; and the little boy is gone to a greengrocer's, to run of errands, and they heard of my situation, and have given him his meals. So you see I leap from joy to joy."

"What do you take," I asked, "for your cough and pain in your chest?"

"I have not had anything to-day but a half-pennyworth of tea-leaves, and that seems to soothe my cough and chest."

Only a handful of firing, saved from the day before, and only one half-penny to spend for herself and little child, the whole of that bitter cold winter day! and yet not one murmur, but all thanksgiving to God for everything he did, and exclaiming at the end, "I leap from joy to joy!"

Oh well might I learn a lesson from this humble bright Christian.

Shall we, surrounded with all our comforts and luxuries, ever murmur or complain?

As I walked home that afternoon, I was humbled to think that, with all my superior privileges and comforts I could not feel such faith as this widow, hidden in her damp, dark back kitchen, resting so peacefully on her Saviour's love, that the deepest poverty could not shake her faith in him. I was filled with joy to witness the strength and reality of vital religion.

How rejoiced I should be, if all who do not know what true Christianity really is, could see such a picture as this.—*Book and its Mission.*

COURAGE, PIOUS MOTHER!—A great and good man said, just before he went to heaven—"The early religious impressions made on my mind by my godly mother, have followed me in all my wanderings through life." Courage, then, good mother! You think your sphere of action humble and obscure, perhaps ; but you may be moulding a character, that shall influence the world through distant ages—work on in faith.

HEALTH IN WOMAN.

CERTAIN it is, that the ill-health of English women has become almost proverbial. Each succeeding generation is found to be less strong—to use a mild form of expression—than the preceding. Why should this be so? Why should it be a fact, that although the duration of life is now longer than it was, there should be more ill-health? The cause is probably to be looked for in the habits of the people; and it is not too much to suppose that the consequences of these habits may be traceable in their descendants. With regard to the female part of the community, fashion, so early as the reign of William II., had introduced the pernicious practice of using stiff, and frequently tight, stays. Yet, in spite of the pressure they exercised on the internal organs, and the weakening of the muscles of the trunk, the women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—not to go back to a more remote date—were much more robust than their descendants of the present day. The reason is to be found in their habits of daily life. During the period alluded to, ladies took an active part in household affairs. Not only was the kitchen, the bakery, the brewhouse, and frequently the dairy, under their especial superveillance, but the thread for the family linen was spun in the house; stockings were knitted, and many other domestic operations were carried on in private houses, which the division of labour, incident to the present day, has transferred to towns. The life of a matron of those times was an active one. Besides the management of the house, she could dress wounds, prescribe after the fashion of the day for the common diseases of the country, and she could distil essences and strong waters. The means of locomotion then in use contributed to render the English woman robust. Carriages were rare; and, where walking was out of the question, the common mode of travelling was on horseback, either on a side-saddle, or on a pillion, behind a male member of the family, or a groom. Even as recently as the year 1825, this mode of travelling was common in the country districts of Devonshire; the 'squire would ride to church with his girl in front of him, and his wife on a pillion behind, holding fast to her husband by a leather belt. Formerly, also, the wives and daughters of farmers would rise with the lark, and carry on horseback the butter they had churned, or the poultry they had reared, to a distant market-town, whence they would return in the evening with well-lined pockets, and panniers

filled with shop goods. Now all these things are changed—the spinning-wheel has disappeared—the housewife purchases, not only the manufactured material for the family linen, but frequently, also the articles ready-made. The higgler calls at each farmhouse for poultry and butter, which he disposes of at market; and the farmer's daughter sits down and plays polkas on the piano. The domestic medicine-chest is mouldy for want of use; the still is cold; the country doctor rides his daily rounds; and the wine-merchant and chemist supply strong waters and medicines; while railways have superseded the rougher conveyances of saddle-horse and pillion.—*St. James's Magazine.*

TRUTH! TRUTH! TRUTH!

“Trust payeth homage unto truth.”

“Little children are
Candid and curious; how they seek
All truth to know and scan,
And ere the budding mind can speak,
Begin to study man!”

MOTHER! father! did you ever think how confiding and trusting is the spirit of your little child? We presume, of course, that he has been trained according to the rules of “the Book” given for your guide by the “God of truth;”—that he has seen no double-dealing in his home—heard no words intending to deceive—seen no “acting a lie.” Then, we say, how confiding is the young spirit! Why, if you told him with a serious countenance that you made the sun, or that the whole world was yours, he would believe you, and tell the fact to those around him, saying, “It is true—for my father or my mother said it!”

Some people are fond of saying things to children, in joke, that often bewilder the little head, and cause the infant heart to doubt its truest friends. A gentleman was one day sawing some wood, when a little girl, who was on a visit to his house, ran by, very near the saw. “Ah! ah!” said he, “if you come so near again, I shall saw your head off.” The child believed him, and ran terrified to the far end of the garden, and when she saw the gentleman near her after this, she would exclaim, “You shall not cut my head off.”

We knew a little girl who was told, when she went to bed one

night, that if she did not remain still and quiet, and go to sleep, she would see frightful things in the dark. The child believed it, and, for years after, she was in the habit of straining her poor little eyes in the dark, to discover what these "frightful things" could be.

One of the best things in this way, which we have known a long time, came under our notice lately. A gentleman from London called on a friend in the country, who has a sweet, well-trained little boy; the gentleman entered into a chat with the little fellow, and presented him with a penny. At length he asked the child if he would go to London with him, "Yes," said the little fellow, with the greatest confidence. "Then run and get your hat," he continued, "and come along with me." The child, nothing doubting, was about to run off for the hat, when his mamma said, "No, my boy; the gentleman does not mean it; he is only joking." This seemed, indeed, a strange matter, and looking up, he asked, "Is he tipsy, then?" "Oh, no!" the mother replied; but the boy had received a new impression of the gentleman's character, and opening his hand, and looking at the piece of money he had received from him, the child asked, "*Is this penny good?*" We should imagine the gentleman will never forget this question.

Mother! father! friend! never talk to little children so that you may leave the impression that you are either "tipsy," or are capable of passing base coin. Take for your motto, in all your intercourse with these little ones, Truth! truth! truth!

MOTHER, ARE THE CHILDREN SAFE?

THERE is scarcely ever a newspaper issued that does not contain an account of some poor child being burnt to death, or scalded, or run over, through the neglect of the mother, who left it in the charge of some little creature not much bigger than itself, and wholly unable to take proper care of it. I once knew a case where a child was burned to death while the mother was gossiping at the chandler's shop at the corner of the lane where she lived. The mother had, as she called it, "just stept out," and the eldest child, about four years old, must needs try to blow the fire; some sparks flew out, and lodged on the pinafore of the baby, who was soon a complete bundle of fire, and while the mother was leaning carelessly over the counter, talking about her neighbour's faults and follies, her infant

was shrieking its last amid the fiery torment. Never shall I forget the look of that woman, as, called by her neighbours, she rushed to her house, and saw a black mass rolled up on the step of the door—all that was left of the smiling baby she had parted from a quarter of an hour before!

It is beautiful to see how very kind and careful the children of a family are to the youngest pet—but while they ought to try to amuse, and nurse it, no young children should be left in charge of a baby, either in a room with a fire, or in a crowded thoroughfare!

What are poor mothers to do? Why, send the children, as soon as they can go, to the infant school, and take care of the baby themselves. Life is God's great gift. Make every effort to preserve it.

A STRUGGLE WITH DIFFIDENCE.

A CHRISTIAN writer truly remarks that a house silent, as regards God's praise, "looks rather like a sepulchre of dead souls, than a habitation of living ones." A household whose daily round of employment is not commenced and ended with prayer is an unsafe abode for adults and children, as regards both their temporal and eternal interests. It is a hallowed scene to behold parents bowing with their children in daily recognition of God, and commending themselves to his care and guidance, amid the dangers of a sinful world; and it is difficult to conceive that parents can have a proper affection for their offspring, and neglect to set them the example of constant trust in their heavenly Father.

The remembrance of a prayerless household may exert a ruinous influence through successive generations, chilling their spiritual emotions, and making them godless. There is a period of life when the example of parents makes a deep and lasting impression upon the child; and if that is not in favour of religion, it is difficult to convince the man in after years that there is anything real in Christianity—remembering as he does, how those who were nearest to him, and who should have cared most for him, did not teach him, by daily example, his duty to God. But there are many heads of families who will admit all this to be true, yet so long have they neglected family worship, that they feel it is a course they are not able to *commence* now. For their encouragement and imitation we publish the following striking incident. Let the reader follow this example of moral heroism. If the husband hesitates and delays, let the wife

assemble the family, read the inspired lesson, and kneel in supplication to God in behalf of her little flock.

He was a good man that Deacon L. He was a farmer, 'well to do,' and always moral and upright. When about forty years old, he became deeply interested in personal religion. Naturally very, *very* diffident, he said little or nothing to any one about his feelings. Months rolled on, and still he was anxious, distressed; while yet he had regular seasons of secret prayer, read his Bible, and was doing all he felt he could and ought to do, save *one thing*. He was the head of a family. He had a loving wife and four children, all impenitent, but they were his, and conscience urged him to the duty of erecting the family altar. But the cross, O it was too great for his timidity! So it was put off, and new duties discharged in other directions as an offset, but he grew nothing the better, nay rather the worse. At length one morning, in his field, he solemnly resolved that that night he would, come what might, make the attempt, at least, to pray in his family. A seamstress was at his house, from whose ridicule and scorn he shrank—but his mind was made up. And here I give his own language. 'When I went home to dinner, she told me she wished to leave that afternoon. Never did I carry a person from my house so gladly before. She was now out of my way, and one great obstacle was removed.

Night came on, and I seemed to gain strength for my duty. But just as I was about to get my Bible, and tell my family what I intended then and thereafter to do, who should knock at the door but the youngest brother of my wife, a mirth-loving, captious young man, a member of college, just the last person in the world I then wanted to see. What shall I do! what! what! my heart cried, and my agony seemed to be more than I could bear. But my vow had been made, and there could be no going back.

I arose, got my Bible, and told them what I was about to do. My wife looked as though she would sink. My children looked one to another, at their mother, and at me, not knowing what was to happen. My brother-in-law seemed greatly amazed. But rallying all my strength, I read a psalm, and at length said, "O Lord"—and could not utter another word; and there was I, a great, stout man, on my knees, a *laughing-stock* for my dear family. There was I, I could not speak, and there was my proud heart humbled,—but there my heavenly Father met me, and my soul was filled with unutterable

peace. When I arose, my poor wife was mortified, and hung her head to conceal her feelings. Her brother said nothing, soon retired, and the next morning left for college.'

Now mark the result of that attempt at prayer, when the good man was, in his own esteem, a laughing-stock. In about a week he received a letter from that brother-in-law student, which began with these words:—"Rejoice with me, brother Daniel, for I have found the Saviour, and that scene at your house the other evening God has blessed to the salvation of my soul." That wife, those children, and many others under the same roof, have found the Saviour through the instrumentality of this praying man.

Be sure it is always best to obey God! Nothing is gained, but much is lost, by shrinking from duty. The Christian is a soldier. He must not *fear* when executing a command. What though for once, or a hundred times, he may be a 'laughing-stock!' It matters nothing, when such interests are at peril. The care of the soul is the great care. Who can—or will—neglect it?

TO BEREAVED PARENTS.

I HAD little idea, when inquiring after you last week, that you had been called to wade through such deep waters, and drink so bitter a cup as your heavenly Father has seen meet to put into your hands. I can truly sympathize with you under this bereavement. Again, again, again, and again, have I stood by the dying bed of dearly beloved children,—held their fluttering pulse—watched their quivering lips—caught the last words which escaped from them, as "the gates of death" opened to receive their spirits, and in an instant shut them out from my view—and have felt my own heart-strings almost like to break—and yet, have thanked God for their release. These, dear friends, are solemn seasons. How difficult to say from the heart, "not my will but Thine be done." At such times I have, as I doubt not you have, been thrown back upon the great principles of the divine government and benevolent purposes of God. I never saw such a fulness, nor felt such a power in the following text, as when called to part with a lovely daughter of five years of age, viz.:—"All things work together for good to them that love God." Hoping that both of you may have much grace, mercy, and peace here, and rest with your dear children and your Lord hereafter.

I write to express my deep sympathy with you under the dispensation of Providence through which you have been called to pass, in the sudden loss of your dear Sophia. Yours is a sorrow with only one mitigating thought and circumstance, viz., that your loss is her gain ; and though you have one tie less on earth, you have one more in heaven. Since we last met as Bradford town missionaries, I too, have lost my "Little Polly." She was a strong, healthy, beautiful girl, but, after two days' illness, God took her! It was the greatest trial that ever came to us. This is a world of trial and sorrow, and if I had no little ones left, I should be glad to fall asleep in Jesus to-morrow. But dear friend, we must be industrious, submissive, and brave. God's ways and time are best ; let us console ourselves with the thought, that, in a little while, we shall meet our beloved ones again under better circumstances, where warmer hearts beat and holier affections glow, and disease and death never enter.

Forget not that heaven is not a place where hearts grow cold. The departed ones love us still. They have lost nothing but the sorrows and infirmities which excited our compassion whilst they were with us. They form part of the "great cloud of witnesses." Jesus is the connecting link between them and us. O! may you meet those whose loss you mourn.

I can truly weep with you to-day! Your kind note is just to hand, informing me that our lovely one was called away from us yesterday morning, to be for ever with the Lord. Oh, what would I give were I this day permitted to glance for a little within the veil! Methinks I see the happy family around the throne, singing "the new song," and their heavenly Father in the midst of them! Be of good cheer, dear friends, you know that the sweet lamb is not lost! In a short time, by Divine aid, we shall meet Sophia and all our beloved ones who died in Jesus, to part no more.

"Indeed," says Archbishop Leighton, "It was a sharp stroke of a pen that told me your pretty Johnny was dead. Sweet thing! and is he so quickly laid asleep? Happy he. Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor being sick, nor of dying; and hath wholly escaped the troubles of schooling, and all other sufferings of boys

and the riper and deeper griefs of riper years; this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now much more akin to the other world; and this will be quickly passed by us all. John has but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world, and all things superfluous beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down. It shall refresh me to hear from you soon."—*Words of Comfort.*

TO A BEREAVED MOTHER.

"WOMAN, WHY WEEPEST THOU?"

WHY dost thou weep?—say, can it be,
Because for ever blest, and free
From sin, from sorrow, and from pain,
Thy child shall never weep again—
Shall never feel, shall never know
E'en half thy little load of woe?

What was thy prayer, when his first smile
Did thy fond mother heart beguile?
When his first cry was in thine ear,
And on thy cheek his first warm tear?
And to thy heart at first were press'd
The throbbings of his little breast?

What was thy prayer? Canst thou not now
See in his bright cherubic brow—
Hear in his soft seraphic strain,
So full of joy, so free from pain—
An answer (as if God did speak)
To all thy love had dared to seek?

Why therefore weep, when all the cares
The doubts, the troubles, and the snares—
The threatening clouds, the falling tears,
Childhood's wild hopes, and manhood's fears,
That might have been for him—for thee,
Have pass'd away, and ne'er shall be?

.
A child of thine, a child of bliss!

Why therefore weep for joy like this?

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

"Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."

THESE were the words of Pharaoh's daughter, when she drew the infant Moses out of the water, and unwittingly consigned him to the care of his own mother: and they are God's gracious words to every woman whom he dignifies with the title, and on whom he imposes the responsible duties of a mother. At the same time, to render these duties her delight, he implants in her heart a love for the helpless little being, more devoted and disinterested, more self-denying, enduring, and tender than can be experienced in any other relationship. But, alas, even this heaven-inspired affection too often degenerates into a species of idolatry. Many mothers forget, that in bestowing this living treasure, God himself remains the proprietor, and that she who receives it from him is responsible to him for the influence she exerts over it, and the example she sets before it. She may cherish the lovely casket with unwearied tenderness and care, but if she neglect the jewel of priceless value which is enshrined within, she most fearfully neglects her duty to her child and her God.

A fond, worldly, weak-minded, selfish mother, seeks no higher reward for all her loving care than the devoted affection of her darling child; but the Christian mother, like Hannah of old, dedicates her precious child to her God from his birth; and daily seeks, in earnest prayer, guidance, strength, and judgment from his Holy Spirit, to enable her rightly to fulfil her ever-recurring maternal duties. She knows that the heart and character of her child must be educated as well as his intellect, she remembers she works for the advancement of his eternal happiness. Her first aim is to inculcate a spirit of unhesitating obedience, that the blessing pronounced upon children who obey their parents, who honour father and mother, may rest upon her little one. Therefore, while she is inexpressibly tender in tone, manner, and countenance, she is firm. Her gentle, loving command must be obeyed; the little ones know this from experience—her word is their law, and they love while they obey. Her love acts upon their love, and thus she wields over them the strongest power on earth or in heaven. This mother loves her children as her own soul, and her highest end and aim, while she endeavours to educate them for a life of active usefulness here, is to lead them onward and upward in that spiritual life which must begin on earth, or it can never be perfected in the world to come.

FILIAL PIETY OF DR. ISAAC WATTS.

AMONGST other curiosities offered for sale at a Bazaar, held in London, were four manuscript sermons by Dr. Watts. To the sermons is prefixed a letter, in his own handwriting, of which the following is a copy :—

“To my honoured and dear mother, Mrs. Sarah Watts.

“Dear Mother,—At your command these four sermons are transcribed ; not as written in my own notes, in brief hints in shorthand, but as taken from my mouth when I preached ym., by one yt. heard em ; and therefore more at large, yet not very uncorrect.

“If they shall be useful to your meditations, and faith, and support, and growth in grace, under your continued afflictions, as they have been to many of my friends at London, give all the honour to the God of grace, and continue to love and pray for

“Your obedient and affectionate son, and willing servant in the Lord,
“ I. WATTS.

“London, Novr. 2, 1702.”

What a rich and abundant recompense for all her maternal anxieties, early instructions, and oft-repeated prayers, must that Christian matron have enjoyed when she received from the hands of her dear son these contributions to her spiritual comfort ! Christian mothers ! emulate her example, and you will share her joy.

THE LAST MOMENTS OF MARIA THERESA.

MARIA Theresa had long been accustomed to look death in the face ; and when the hour of trial came, her resignation, her fortitude, and her humble trust in heaven never failed her. Her agonies during the last ten days of her life were terrible, but never drew from her a single expression of complaint or impatience. She was only apprehensive that her reason and her physical strength might fail her together. She was once heard to say, “God grant that these sufferings may soon terminate, for otherwise, I know not if I can much longer endure them.” After receiving the last sacraments, she summoned all her family to her presence, and solemnly recommended them to the care of the Emperor Joseph, her eldest son. “My son,” said she, “as you are the heir to all my worldly possessions, I cannot dispose of them ; but my children are still, as they have ever been,

my own. I bequeath them to you, be to them a father. I shall die contented if you promise to take that office upon you." She then turned to her son Maximilian and her daughters, blessed them individually, in the tenderest terms, and exhorted them to obey and honour their elder brother as their father and sovereign. After repeated fits of agony and suffocation, endured to the last with the same invariable serenity and patience, death at length released her, and she expired on the 29th of November, 1780, in her sixty-fourth year. She was undoubtedly the greatest and best ruler who ever swayed the imperial sceptre of Austria; while, as a woman, she was one of the most amiable and exemplary of those in high station who lived in the eighteenth century.—*Women of Worth.*

THE INVINCIBLES OF COMMON LIFE.

"WHAT a glorious troop might be formed of those men who have won their laurels in the campaign of life, fighting, not against sword and bayonet, musket and cannon, lance and sabre; but against hardship and circumstances, natural defects, and the ridicule or opposition of their fellow-men! There has been, and still is, we trust, many a man, who—seeing before him a great and noble end to be gained; God's glory to be advanced; man's happiness and well-being to be extended; the Gospel to be preached; the truths of science to be ascertained; the ignorant to be enlightened; the depraved to be raised, or good of any kind to be done—has manfully determined to do it, and has not failed. How far greater the honour; how much more worthy the victories of such men than those of mere soldiers. And their deeds have not perished with them; their useful works remain as monuments to their glory. Possessing noble, enterprising spirits; a courage nothing can daunt; an endurance superior to all rebuffs and all hardships; a perseverance which rises again in spite of failures: these invincibles have conquered, where all other men have been beaten back by the opposing obstacles; nay, where others have not even dared to make the attempt. Nor has the fight been against a visible or tangible foe alone: these men have had themselves to conquer! their ignorance or indolence; their natural leaning to evil; the bad habits of early days; or even their poverty and the lowness of their social station."—*The Art of Doing our Best.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

GOODNESS AND MERCY.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 12TH, 1862,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM Y. ROOKER, M.A.,

AT THE

IRON CHURCH, RIDLEY ROAD, KINGSLAND.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Psalm xxiii. 6.

THIS language is exceedingly appropriate as bringing to a close one of the most beautiful, and one of the most striking productions of a divinely inspired man—the sweet singer of Israel. He set out by saying, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and you perceive that he retains, even to the last, the idea with which he started—that of the relation which God sustains to him as the Shepherd, the gracious and Divine Benefactor.

In the first verse he expresses this in the way of a simple negative. Bold as it is, yet it does not equal the conclusion. He rises up to the last culminating point, as it were, of a triumphant faith when without a negative and with the power of an oath of affirmation, he says, "Surely"—for it is the same as "Verily, verily"—"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Let us consider what is the "goodness" of which David here speaks. When he says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," what does *want* mean? We may regard it as embracing everything for time and eternity, that which affects the body as much as

that which affects the the soul. He should not want for anything. Then he goes on to speak of God's dealings with him, and concludes with "goodness and mercy," which he declares will follow him all the days of his life.

"Goodness" here, and indeed throughout the Scriptures, has reference especially to those temporal benefits and blessings which God confers upon man. The evidence of his goodness was to be found in the fact that "He makes his sun to shine upon the evil and the good" alike; in the bountiness of nature, and the blessings of Providence. The goodness of God refers only to these. There are some who in the reading of the Scriptures lack that proper discernment of language that rightly understood would enable them to acquaint themselves with the Divine will. "Goodness," like "love," is a distinguishing thing. There is what we call the love of pity, or compassion; there is also the love of complacency or delight. Now God never loves the sinner with the love of complacency; he never loves him with the love of delight, for he sees nothing in him in which he can delight; but everything that he hates. But he does love him with the love of pity, or the love of compassion, desiring that he should turn to him and live. But the love which God has for his own people is the love of complacency, of satisfaction, of positive personal delight. Goodness, then, embraces all the temporal dispensations of God, all the blessings and bounties of creation—the over-ruling, sustaining, guiding, directing power of all the events of Providence. It embraces all things of time from the motion of a rock falling to its base, from the collection of the atoms of water from the ocean surface into a thick cloud, and then the drifting of that cloud by the wind, till it descends in a fertilizing shower, or in an overwhelming flood; it is Providence alike that strews our coast with wrecks, and covers our fields with vegetation, and our gardens with beauty. It is Providence that governs the principles of human invention, and the application of those principles. It was Providence

that determined when the gold of California should be discovered, the time when it should come to this country, by what ship it should come, and who should obtain it. So also in reference to the discovery and application of Steam and of Electricity. There is an over-ruling Providence in all these things. In the same way Providence has to do with individual interests, in domestic, and in commercial life. It is Providence that has made us what we are, and has put us where we are. It is Providence, brethren, that has led you here to-day, and given you one more opportunity of hearing the Gospel and embracing it; and if you reject it and despise it, Providence may place you next Sunday beyond the reach of the Gospel message.

Goodness, says David, shall follow me—the Providence of God shall follow me. The older we grow, beloved friends, the more experience we get of the providential dealings of God. But some of us experience, unquestionably, far more than others. A man of a hundred years may not compare in his experience with another man of forty. God gives to one man a condition of ease and comfort, and to another trials and afflictions. God may determine, as in the case of Job, to make a man an example of his grace, and to show to another that there is a God that judgeth in the earth. He puts his own people in the fire, gives them troubles and sufferings, to show to the world, and to hell itself, to principalities and powers in heavenly places, what his grace can do, and how utterly impossible it is that anything should pluck out of his hand a soul redeemed with his most precious blood. The Christian, therefore, the man whose eyes have been opened, who has been divinely taught by the power of an inward regeneration, by the influence of the Holy Spirit of God, that man has been called up into the third heavens and heard with Paul such things as it is impossible for men to utter, or for those who have never experienced the grace of God to understand. He has, therefore, come forth from this ordeal of preparation to understand the nature and character of the Divine covenant by which he

has been brought out of a state of sin, iniquity, and ruin, into a state of covenant relationship of peace and mercy, with his God. And being thus brought out, his life may present only a chequered scene. It is positively declared by God, that if any man considers himself to be a Christian, to be a child of God, and be without chastisement, he is a bastard, and not a son. "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." It is through much tribulation that every one of His shall enter into the kingdom; and at the last, when the crowning scene shall take place in the presence of myriads of spirits and seraphs around the throne, when it shall be asked, "Who are these, and whence came they?" the answer shall proceed from the throne itself, "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Then take it as a fact, that sooner or later, you will have storms to contend with. Ah the sun of early life is sometimes like a sun of an early morning; you pass on to its meridian, and clouds gather about it, and towards its decline mists and darkness obscure its brightness, and oft-times the darkness is accompanied with terrific storms. But still the Christian, the true child of God, may be assured that goodness and mercy will follow him all the days of his life. Understand by "goodness," the whole of the dispensations of God, be they what they may, and that you are to let faith triumph in the midst of all, saying, surely goodness shall follow me. It is all good for the Christian, whatever may be the cup he is called upon to drink. It may be bitter, like the nauseous draught of the physician, but it shall restore him to spiritual health. It matters not what calls it forth, whether it is direct and positive sin, or whether it is the inherent tendencies of a corrupt nature, it is administered by the hand of a loving Father, whose only object is to separate the sin which he hates in his child, from the soul which he loves. If sickness enters into my family, if my children

are taken from me, and delivered to an early grave, as is the case with some amongst you, it is nevertheless well. Even during the past week, two little ones, who had been the joy and sun of their parents' households, and who gathered round their Christmas tree, are dead; not twenty days had passed away before they were both in their coffins; and there they lay now. But in all such bereavements you would see the goodness of God if you could but understand that his nature and his name are love, and see and feel that nothing can betide you that is not guided by a spirit of intense love.

But it is not merely "goodness," it is "goodness and mercy." Goodness apart from mercy would be a curse, would be the heaviest curse God could inflict upon you. I pity the condition of a man who has a happy home, who prospers in the world, who is surrounded with God's goodness and who is yet a stranger to his mercy. It is like giving rich viands and luxuries to a man who is on his way to the place of execution. The man who has goodness but no mercy, will be dashed for ever in eternal misery when he comes to die! He had better have been without the goodness of God. I know of no condition so bad as that of the man who has the goodness but not the mercy here spoken of. But mercy is promised to the child of God. Mercy; would you know its value? Ask the inmates of our prison-houses, who are dragging out their miserable existences and whose very life is a curse, what would be the value of a deed of pardon to them that would set them free? Would you know the value of mercy? Ask the creditor, who is bound by that, to my mind, most iniquitous law, which puts a man in a cell for life, and shuts him out from the opportunity of ever being an honest man—ask him what would be the value of a deed of mercy that would pay his debts and set him free? Would you know the value of mercy? Ask the man upon the gallows, just before the drop is ready to fall and while the rope is being fixed about his neck, what is the value of mercy, when the prolongation of life would be a

wretched thing, when his character is blackened with the curse of a felon's guilt; he would still say that the value of mercy is priceless. There is no language to express its worth, no standard whereby to estimate its value. But in all these cases the mercy would have reference simply to human law—the power by which man has control over the body of his fellow-man. But what is this to the mercy extended to him over whom there is hanging the curse of a broken law that shall consign both body and soul to an eternal hell! Ask the man whose heart God has touched with the influence of his Spirit, and who mourns under the consciousness of sin, what is the worth of a pardon that would tell him—"Thy sins are forgiven thee?" Ask that man on his dying bed who has come to end his days without any preparation for eternity, what is the value of mercy, and he will tell you that he is perishing for the want of it. Let the groans of the damned be a voice of warning to your own souls. Mercy; can any mortal compute the value of that blessing? And yet David says, "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." The covenant of grace reaches backwards and forwards—backwards from everlasting and forwards to everlasting still. Even where sin hath abounded the mercy is so great that grace abounds there much more. Mercy; then he shall pardon all my sins; He shall bear with my imperfections; He shall pass by my wanderings; He shall restore me to his fold when I go astray; He shall direct me when my ignorance misleads me; mercy shall follow me, I will live under his covenant. Nothing can occur to me which has not been unforeseen, and provided for, even to the wandering of a single thought, or even to the passing through the mind of a single improper desire—provided for in a living, Omnipotent Mediator, who has applied the merit of his cleansing blood to relieve me from the guilt of it all. And sooner than any single hope that has ever been built upon the promise of a covenant God shall fail—the everlasting, eternal covenant that has been entered into between the Father, Son,

and Holy Ghost, must first be cancelled and cast out of the Sovereign counsels of Jehovah, and heaven itself become one vast region of discord and anarchy. But the covenant shall stand fast for ever, and every hope built upon it shall be fulfilled.

David adds to this goodness and mercy that it will *follow* him all the days of his life. He does not say that he will work for it, or that he will pray for it. He does not say he shall have it because he desires it; but he says it shall *follow* him, like the stream from the rock that followed the Israelites through the desert, which rock was Christ. They did not dig pits for it; and let me tell you it is just the same here, for it was but a type of his dealings with his children in every age. Mark its *constancy*. "It will follow me *all the days* of my life;" not a fullness to-day and want to-morrow. Not a fluctuating, but a continuous supply—it shall follow me day by day. Then mark its *perpetuity*. It shall be for all the days of your life. Notice also the crowning point, as embracing the spiritual as well as the temporal—"I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Such, followers of Christ, are the blessings that are for you. Where God has imposed no conditions be you 'ware of throwing any obstacle in the way. Have no "ifs," no "buts" between you and God. He says, "Surely, surely," "Verily, verily"—it is an oath of affirmation spoken under the power of the Spirit of God; let us, therefore, have no "ifs;" "if I continue to be good," "If I do this or do that." No "ifs" unless you want to destroy your own peace. If you put impediments where God has put none you must stumble over them and be broken. I am content to go where God leads. When temptations come upon you, look back to the everlasting Covenant—God's everlasting choice of you in Christ, and you will learn afresh that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus; that his sheep shall never perish. And this not for anything they have done or can do, but because of the grace of God. I shall do what is according to his will, I shall walk in his way, I shall de-

light myself in the knowledge of the Most High, in the same way that the fruit is provided for in the life of the tree. When the tree has no leaves the life is still there, and the tree is gathering in the elements of sap and fibre, and the leaves of spring and the fruits of summer are in it, provided for in the life of the tree. It is just so with the soul renewed in the Divine image—there is provision in the covenant for conformity to God's will, for delight in his ways. So that from beginning to end there are no "ifs" or "buts." Take it as a sure thing, and not a thing of empty words. Let an overwhelming faith grasp its truth, grasp it with a power that shall never suffer anything to sever you from it. Let your language be, Thus saith the Lord. "He hath spoken, and shall he not make it good; hath he said it and will he not do it." Let it be a source of abounding consolation to you in your journey through life. You will often have occasion for recurrence to this truth. The days of darkness and sorrow will come upon you, and troubles cross your path. The days of gloom and temptation will certainly overtake you, and you will want this truth to support you. Yes, and let your faith rest upon the fact that it is the same Almighty Being that brought the world into existence of his own will, and fixed the bounds of the ocean, who is pledged to you. May you not, therefore, take up the triumphant language of the Psalmist in another place and say—"Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea, for the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Sketches and Essays.

WOMAN, HER GLORY AND GREATNESS.

She it is who stamps the coin
Of character, and makes the being, who would
be a savage,
But for her cares, a Christian man ;
Then crown her queen of the world.

To find woman's just and dignified position, we must come to the pages of the Word of God. It has been objected against her that she had the chief place in our ruin ; she had the chief place in our restoration also. Ought not Bethlehem, with its touching scenes, its glorious splendour, when the Magi bowed and worshipped, to be more than a compensation for Eden, when the too faithful record was, "The woman gave me, and I did eat?" If we turn to the personal ministry of our blessed Lord, we shall find what a dignified position the Son of God, who was also the Son of Mary, gives to woman ; there is nothing finer.

In the romance or the sketch of the man of this world, the writer paints woman as if she were a sort of super-celestial being, half divine, half human. If we take the degraded notions of a Hindoo, a Mahometan, or a Pagan, they seem to regard her as a mere toy, or a mere slave, or a mere subservient sensuous creature. But open the New Testament, and you will see what old Mr. Howells used to remark of the Bible, its intense good sense. You will find all reference to woman throughout our Lord's life was that of pure and holy deference. He seems to indicate indirectly, though not avowedly, that through her more than was lost in Eden was now restored ; and that if Eve was first in the transgression, Eve, not Adam, is first in the restoration and recovery. Instances of this are abundant. How stern was his remark to Judas the hypocrite, when he murmured because a grateful female poured out the precious perfume, and anointed his feet with it, and wiped them with the hairs of her head ; saying, in language the most touching in one sense, but the most

The Mother's Magazine. March, 1862.

gentle in another, the most cutting to Judas, the most complimentary to her, "She hath done what she could." How tender, yet how pure, his address to another, "Go and sin no more." How gentle to a third, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee." How kind, to preach a long sermon, and to spend a large amount of his time, when a single woman was all his congregation, at the well of Samaria. How exquisitely pure and holy his hospitalities under the roof of Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus; and how touching his care, uttered in his last words in the midst of his agony upon the cross, when he told John to take charge of the widowed and homeless Mary, by giving her a home in his own house.

How remarkable is it that in all the Gospels we do not find one single rebuke pronounced upon woman; and amid all the shouts of scorn, derision, and contempt that swelled through the air on the streets of Jerusalem, there is not one single record of a woman's voice being heard. Now what does all this seem to indicate? That we should look less at Eve's part in the Fall, and look more at the resplendent glory in which the daughters of Eve shine in Christ's redeeming and restoring light.

When we open the Epistles in the New Testament, or appeal to the Acts, what do we find? In the close of the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, we discover that out of sixteen persons to whom the Apostle expresses his obligations in connexion with the preaching of the gospel, ten, if not twelve of these, are females. Open the Acts of the Apostles, and you will find that some of the most illustrious specimens of Christian character were females. Read the biography of that excellent minister, Timothy. From whom did he get his learning? If they that receive theirs at Universities—and they should go there—would only study in the same school to which Timothy went, they would not have reason to repent it. He learnt his first alphabet from his grandmother Lois, and his Christian education for the ministry from his mother Eunice; and was ever a better preacher brought forth from any University than was brought up in that humble home of Lois and Eunice?

If we take the history of good and great men, do we not find many—it is a striking fact—attribute their best, holiest, and most lasting impressions to a mother? I will not give you instances that are familiar to us all; I will quote one passage of, perhaps, one of the greatest statesmen, and the most accomplished writers that ever lived

—I mean Sir James Macintosh. Speaking of his mother, and writing where he did not expect that his words would be published, he said : “I should have been swept away by the flood of French infidelity if it had not been for the remembrance of the time when my sainted mother used to make me kneel, taking my little hands in hers, and making me repeat the Lord’s prayer. To her I owe whatever I am ; to her the hopes of whatever I shall be.”

Here is a noble testimony ! Why do I quote this ? Not to flatter the female sex, but to show what a power they may wield, what an influence they may have ; and how needful that an influence which seems to have a giant force should have a Christian’s heart to sanctify, inspire, and wield it. The fact is, when we read the history of the world we shall find that, in many a war, the sword would positively have decimated mankind had it not been for the mitigating and the softening influences of woman. And in some of the greatest eras she had no mean part. I need not refer you to Moses ; he was the deliverer of a nation, the lawgiver of a church ; but who watched over the ark that floated to and fro amid the surges of the Nile ? who was it that drew him forth from the river ? who was it that trained him up to duty to usefulness, and to good ? In every instance a woman. Columbus discovered America, but it was queen Isabella that sold her jewels in order to equip him for the magnificent and glorious enterprise. The Spartan soldier was a hero, but it was the Spartan mother—when she addressed the young soldier, giving him his shield, “Either come back with this or upon this”—that inspired the great mass of the heroism by which he was characterised.—*J. Cumming, D.D.*

NEVER DECEIVE CHILDREN.

I WAS spending a few days with an intimate friend, and never did I see a more systematic housewife, and what then seemed to me one who had so quiet and complete control of her child. But the secret of the latter I soon learned. One evening she wished to spend with me at a neighbour’s ; it was a small social gathering of friends, therefore she was very desirous of attending ; but her child demanded her presence with him. After undressing him, and hearing him say his prayers, she said,

“Willie, did you see that pretty little kitten in the street to-day ?”

"Yes, I did," he replied, "I wish I had her; wasn't she pretty?"

"Yes, very; now don't you want me to buy this kitty for you? Perhaps the man will sell her."

"Oh, yes, mother, do buy her."

"Well, then, be a good boy while I am gone;" thus saying, she closed the door, but he immediately called her back.

"Don't go till morning, then I can go with you; won't you stay?"

"No, Willie, the man won't sell it if I don't go to-night, so be a good boy."

He said no more, but quietly lay down.

"Is this the way you govern your child?" said I, after we had gained the street; "if you did but know the injury you are doing, you would take a different course."

"Injury!" she repeated, "why what harm have I done? I did not tell him I would see the man, I only asked him if I should."

"But you gave him to understand that you would. He is not old enough to detect the deception now, but he soon will be. Then I fear you will perceive your error too late. You have yourself grafted a thorn in the young rose, which will eventually pierce you most bitterly. You cannot break off the thorn, or club the point, to make it less piercing. On your return he will not see the kitten, therefore you will have to invent another falsehood to conceal the first."

We had now gained our friend's door, which ended our conversation. During the evening she seemed gayer than usual; my words had little or no effect upon her. She did not think her little one was doing all in his power to keep awake to see the coveted kitten on her return, wondering what made "Mother gone so long." It was late ere I reminded her we ought to return. But little was said during our homeward walk. She went noiselessly into the room, supposing her boy asleep, but he heard her, and said,

"Mother, is that you? Have you brought the kitten? I kept awake to see it, and I was so sleepy."

"No, my dear; the man would not sell her."

"Why won't he, mother?" he asked with quivering lips.

"I don't know; I suppose he wants her to catch rats and mice."

"Did he say so, mother?"

"He did not say just that, but I thought he meant so."

"I did want it so bad, mother." The little lips quivered, and the tears started to his eyes. He rubbed them with his little hands,

winking very fast to keep them back, but they would come ; at last he fell asleep, with the pearly drops glistening on his rosy cheeks. The mother's glistened also. As she knelt to kiss them away, he murmured softly, in his broken slumber, "I did want it so bad." She turned her dewy eyes towards me, saying,

"You have led me to see my error. Never will I again, let what will be the consequences, deceive my child to please myself."

The importance of truth, without deception, in the management of children, is illustrated by the anecdote narrated in the following paragraph :—"Two small boys met in the street, and after some minutes spent in conversation, one remarked to the other that some little thing might be obtained if he could procure a few pence from his parents. 'But,' said the other, 'I don't need any money to obtain it, for my mother told me I should have it at such a time.' 'Pooh!' said the first, 'my mother has promised me so many times, and I did not get it, and I do not think you will either. Our mothers only tell us so to get rid of us, and I think it will be so with yours.' 'What, my mother tell a lie!' exclaimed the little fellow, and immediately left his companion with a countenance filled with indignation. What a lesson should this afford to all parents, guardians, and those who have the care of youth."

OCCUPATION FOR CHILDREN :—The habits of children prove that occupation is of necessity with most of them. They love to be busy, even about nothing; still more to be usefully employed. With some children it is strongly developed physical necessity, and, if not turned to good account, will be productive of positive evil; thus verifying the old adage, that "idleness is the mother of mischief." Children should be encouraged, or, if indolently disinclined to do it, should be disciplined into performing for themselves every little office relative to the toilet, which they are capable of performing. They should also keep their own clothes and other possessions in neat order, and fetch for themselves whatever they want; in short, they should learn to be as independent of the services of others as possible, fitting them alike to make a good use of prosperity, and to meet with fortitude any reverse of fortune that may befall them. I know of no rank however exalted, in which such a system would not prove beneficial.

—*Hints on the Formation of Character.*

THE CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLD.

O HAPPY house ! where Thou art loved the best,
 Dear Friend and Saviour of our race !
 Where never comes such welcomed, honoured Guest,
 Where none can ever fill Thy place ;
 Where every heart goes forth to meet Thee,
 Where every ear attends Thy word,
 Where every lip with blessing greets Thee,
 Where all are waiting on their Lord.

O happy house ! where two are one in heart,
 In faith and hope are one,
 Whom death can only for a little part,
 Nor end the union here begun ;
 Who share together one salvation,
 Who would be with Thee, Lord always,
 In gladness or in tribulation,
 In happy or in evil days.

O happy house ! whose little ones are given
 Early to Thee, in faith and prayer—
 To Thee, their friend, who from the heights of heav'n,
 Guards them with more than mother's care.
 O happy house ! when little voices
 Their glad hosannas love to raise ;
 And childhood's lisping tongue rejoices
 To bring new songs of love and praise.

O happy house ! and happy servitude !
 Where all alike one Master own ;
 Where daily duty, in Thy strength pursued,
 Is never hard nor toilsome known ;
 Where each one serves Thee, meek and lowly,
 Whatever Thine appointment be,
 Till common tasks seem great and holy,
 When they are done as unto Thee.

O happy house ! where Thou art not forgot
 When joy is flowing full and free ;
 O happy house ! where every wound is brought,
 Physician, Comforter, to Thee.
 Until at last, earth's day's work ended,
 All meet Thee in that home above,
 From whence Thou camest, where Thou hast ascended,
 Thy heaven of glory and of love.

BLIND BESS; OR, "ASK AND RECEIVE."

LOCATED on the south-west coast of Ireland is the small town of T——. Its surrounding scenery is fine. At a short distance from the town stretches a chain of mountains, whose somewhat gloomy aspect stands out in beautiful contrast with the luxuriant foliage and rich vegetation of the valley beneath. In painful contradiction of this natural beauty, however, is the moral and religious condition of the population. Shut up in Egyptian darkness, they yield a blind and implicit obedience to the false teachers who have usurped authority over them; guides, who may, in the words of our Saviour, be emphatically termed, "blind leaders of the blind." Instead of sanctuaries where Christ alone is worshipped, we find, on every hand, convents, monasteries, with the votaries of a false faith, priests, brethren, friars, and so-called sisters of mercy! How does the heart ache to see the deluded masses wend their way to bow at the shrine of the Virgin. But it is cheering to the heart of a Christian, in the midst of all this darkness, to meet with here and there those who love and worship the only true God. Such an one was blind Bess. Trained by a Christian mother, she had known the Scriptures from her youth, and now, in the time of old age, blindness, and destitution, could refer those who visited her to the chapter and verse of all her favourite portions of God's Word. In it she delighted, and found its promise a sufficient support under her afflictions. The particular answer to prayer which she related was as follows. She said she had been blind for twenty-six years. Some time previously she had been struck on the eye by a snowball, and it was feared she would then lose her sight. However, by the blessing of God on the means used, she so far recovered as to have tolerably good sight. About the time above mentioned she suffered the loss of her mother; and though perfectly assured that her loved parent was gone to heaven, she could not refrain from the bitterest grief. The consequence was, that through excessive weeping and sleepless nights, she lost her sight completely. Being in very poor circumstances, her blindness proved a great calamity, as she had no person to care for her. She had been some days in her small room. Not a single individual had looked in upon her. She had not a morsel of food, nor had she tasted anything for two days. She was begining to feel much enfeebled in body, and to wonder what would become of her.

She thought, "Well, the Lord knows all about me!" and kneeling down, she prayed especially that God would deliver her from her present trouble. Having previously fastened her door, she had prayed, as nearly as she could tell, about ten minutes, when a knock came at the door. She could scarcely believe it; there not having been a single person to break the solitude of her lonely apartment for the last four days. She rose from her knees. Again the knock came. She opened the door, and asked, "Who is there? No answer was returned, but a hand was put in at the open door, putting a half-crown piece into hers. She asked again, "Who is it?" No answer. She then said, "If you please, who am I to thank for this? "Thank the Lord!" were the only words spoken. Nor could she ever, though she made every possible inquiry, ascertain who it was that had thus ministered to her necessity. This was indeed an answer to prayer. No doubt God disposed the heart and directed the steps of this unknown benefactor to that lone room where succour was so much needed. Even while yet speaking she was heard and her prayer answered.

DISOBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

EVERY little child, when born into this world, carries within his heart the germ of this sin; and unless by the grace of God a new and opposing principle is introduced into his heart, by-and-by that little germ will develop itself, grow, strengthen, blossom, and bear fruit a hundred-fold, until the man stands forth a full-grown rebel—if not against the authority of man, certainly against the authority of God. Too frequently, indeed, he who has not been early taught to submit himself to the law of God will grow up to disregard the laws of man, if they cross his will; and if it were not for the outward restraints and penalties which, for the benefit of society, are attached to every breach of the law of the land, we should doubtless see much more of that open rebellion and transgression of them than we now do. As with some mighty river, if we traced it back to its source, we should find it perhaps under the form of a small trickling streamlet, so insignificant as to escape notice if not carefully sought for; so, in like manner, were we to trace back the life of many a notorious rebel against his king and his country, we should discover the first principles of his rebellion in the nursery, in his very mother's arms. Then,

because he was thought too young to understand, he was allowed the unrestrained exercise of his will in any little act of disobedience he pleased. Afterwards, finding that the same principle in the management of him was still carried out as he grew older, he discovered by persevering he should conquer, and so he did; and the small beginnings of disobedience increased to a flood, and in time carried away all before them.

Godly and wise parents are too concious of the sad truth of this, to neglect the work appointed to them by God, and they will begin betimes to watch for and counteract the early beginnings of this fatal sin in their little child. Above all they will unceasingly pray that God would graciously send the Holy Spirit into the heart of their child, and so new-create that heart after the image of Christ; that from a child of disobedience he may become a child of God, and obedient to him in all things. They will then rise from prayer, to do diligently their part in the work; and not, as, alas! too many inconsistent Christian parents do, leave the matter there, and forget that they themselves are commanded of God to train up the child in the right way, the way of obedience, if they look for his walk and continuance in that way. By such neglect how many a child of Christian parents has suffered; and by thus being left to himself has grown up to be a grief to them, and so has brought a reproach upon their profession.

The Bible-taught parent will rise up from his knees to set himself in earnest to the work of training. He has prayed for a blessing on the work, and in full assurance of faith he looks for a blessing. He has prayed, and he will daily pray, for wisdom to direct him; he has too often experienced the faithfulness of God's promises, to doubt now. What an interesting, and yet what a sad occupation it is, to watch the mind and the ways of a little child; to see so much that is fresh, and pure, and loving, and trusting in its nature, and yet at the same time to behold such marks of evil mixed up with all; such wilfulness, such selfishness, such greediness, such deceit, such anger; and, to come back to the starting-point, such a spirit of disobedience, sometimes exercised, it would seem, merely for the pleasure of disobedience! How anxiously will the Christian parent watch these beginnings of sin, that he may use all the means in his power tenderly yet vigorously to counteract them! He will act towards his child as a careful gardener would with a most rare and delicate plant; watering

it, sheltering it from evil influences, plucking out every little weed before it becomes strong, nourishing it with the fresh air from heaven, placing it so as to catch the first rays of the morning sun, examining it well morning by morning, lest any devouring insect, any secret worm, be at hand to mar the work of careful cultivation. The godly parent will especially direct his attention to the seemingly little sin of disobedience in his child. That sin will soon become apparent in the youngest; it is engrained in its very nature. Let a child be told not to touch some particular thing; instantly the spirit within prompts the child to set its mind upon that very thing, and to desire and to resolve to touch it, if only with a finger. Tell it not to crawl to a particular part of the room, it will at once just turn towards the forbidden spot; thus proving itself to be, in its natural state, a child of disobedience.

If the child is permitted to repeat these little acts of disobedience unchecked, day by day, it must necessarily follow that the spirit of disobedience within will grow and strengthen also day by day. Whereas if gently, but most decidedly, the child is taught that it must obey, (however much it may resist,) the great work of counteraction is begun; and if carried on in God's strength, will go on until the great point of obedience is firmly established between parent and child. A child soon discovers when it is likely to get its own way; it will try hard for it, sometimes very hard; but if the parent do but consider how much is at stake he will never falter in his purpose. He will shut his ears to the cry of entreaty, even though at last the cry may turn to passion. But if the child do but see in his father's countenance that look of gentle firmness, of unswerving decision, which he will well understand, the cries will become fainter, and soon altogether cease. A few such struggles for the mastery, and the matter is most frequently decided. The child finds that he must submit, and from henceforth the great foundation of education, obedience, having been laid, the work will be comparatively easy. The child has been taught the lesson of obedience to his earthly parent, as the preparation for the far higher duty of obedience to his heavenly Father.

This training of obedience must begin, and go on, before the child is old enough to understand what is said to him. It must still go on, though in a different way when he is older, and can understand what is said to him. Then he must be taught obedience to his

earthly parent on the principle of obedience to God. As soon as his young mind can take in the lesson, he must be taught that God has commanded him to obey his parents, and that in so doing he obeys God ; and he must also learn that while in every case he would be bound to obey, it is best to obey willingly, and because God has commanded obedience.

THE MOTHER'S GRIEF.

BY REV. T. DALE.

To mark the sufferings of the babe
That cannot speak its woe,
To see the infants' tears gush forth,
Yet know not why they flow ;
To meet the meek, uplifted eye,
That fain would ask relief,
Yet can but tell of agony—
This is a mother's grief.

Through dreary days and darker nights
To trace the march of death,
To hear the faint and frequent sigh,
The quick and shorten'd breath ;
To watch the last dread strife draw near,
And pray that struggle brief,
Though all is ended with the close—
This is a mother's grief.

To see in one short hour decay'd
The hope of future years ;
To feel how vain a father's prayers,
How vain a mother's tears ;
To think the cold grave now must close
O'er what was once the chief
Of all the treasured joys of earth—
This is a mother's grief.

Yet, when the first wild throb is past
Of anguish and despair,
To lift the eye of faith to heaven,
And think, " My child is there !"
This best can dry the gushing tears—
This yield the heart relief ;
Until the Christian's pious hope
O'ercomes a mother's grief.

MRS. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

MRS. EDWARDS, whose maiden name was Sarah Pierrepont, was born at New Haven, Connecticut, on the 9th of January, 1710. Her father was an eminent, pious, and useful minister. Her mother was a minister's daughter. Miss Pierrepont was thus trained in a home of piety, and had the example of Christian character before her in her imitative years. She was educated in a superior manner, and her powers of mind were of a high order. In her fifth year, she seemed to possess a spiritual mind; and she grew in grace as she advanced in stature. Mr. Edwards knew her when she was thirteen years old, and made this record regarding her:—

“They say there is a young lady in New Haven, who is loved of that great Being who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her, and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything, except to meditate on Him—that she expects after a while, to be received up where He is, to be raised up out of the world, and caught up to heaven; being assured that He loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from Him always. There she is to dwell with Him, and to be ravished with His love for ever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it, and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections, is most just and conscientious in all her conduct, and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this great Being.”

Five years after this, Mr. Edwards asked her to become his wife, and obtained her consent. She was only eighteen, but she entered upon the duties of her station with much gravity, wisdom, and faith in God. “Perhaps no stronger evidence can be given of her substantial worth than that from the first she discharged them in such a manner as to secure the high and increasing approbation of all who knew her.”

She had a family of three sons and eight daughters, some of whom died in youth, and all of whom she trained with singular skill and Christian nurture. It was her custom to pray for them both before their birth, and afterwards to pray with them regularly. She

governed them without angry words or heavy blows. She spoke gently and ruled firmly. She needed to speak but once—a great virtue how seldom attained in family government. She learned them to be respectful to their parents; and they were in the habit of rising from their seats always when their parents entered the room, and of remaining silent when their father or mother spoke. She early sought to subdue their will, for she was persuaded that “until a child will obey his parents, he can never be brought to obey God.” She united with her husband in her family discipline, and sought his counsel and prayers in difficult cases. Then they were wont to confer together as about a matter of the highest importance. Their remote descendants are found in the Church of Christ; some of them eminent ministers of the gospel, and authors of lasting repute. These are results worthy of a believing mother's faithful care and labour, and they are open to all “mothers in Israel.”

As a wife, Mrs. Edwards was admirably suited to the peculiar constitution, character, and office of her husband. She was truly a help-meet for him. She studied his necessities and met them with cheerfulness and assiduity. She counted it her happiness to minister to his comfort and aid him in his holy work. Devoted as he was to study, he had no tact for wordly business; but she took the entire management of his affairs, and ordered them with prudence and great economy. “She was conscientiously careful that nothing should be wasted and lost; and often when she herself took care to save anything of trifling value, or directed her children or others to do so, or when she saw them waste anything, she would repeat the words of our Saviour ‘**THAT NOTHING BE LOST,**’ which words she said she often thought of as containing a maxim worth remembering, especially when considered as a reason alledged by Christ why His disciples should gather up the fragments of that bread which He had just before created with a word.

She was very hospitable and kind to strangers, and was capable of making them happy in her house. She never condescended to gossip or to tear the character of others. It was her rule to speak well of all, if she could do so with truth, and to be silent if she had nothing to commend. She abhorred back-biting and evil-speaking, and had no resentment though exposed with her husband to much unkindness. She loved spiritual conversation, and diligently promoted it in all companies. Her mind was always open to the things

of God, and she wished to cultivate her soul, and to aid in the cultivation of others.

Secret prayer was her delight, and the source of her sustained spirituality of tone. Family worship and social prayer she prized. She was wont to gather together persons of her own sex for Christian converse and prayer, and exercised by this a very important influence over the minds of mothers and young women.

A great revival of religion occurred at Northampton during Mr. Edwards' ministry, in which she shared very largely. Her soul seemed to get a wonderful enlargement, a full assurance of God's love, and great peace in Christ as her Lord and Redeemer. She was singularly sensitive to sin, and shrank from it with aversion. She exemplified her piety in all her relative duties, and thus "adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things." Christian mothers, strive to reach a devotedness like this. Grace made Mrs. Edwards so blessed. That grace is offered to you by Christ Jesus—*British Herald*.

"GOD BLESS MY MOTHER."

MOTHERS must often lean on God's promises, in faith that their wayward children will be reached by prayer, and led back to Christ. A chaplain in the navy writes :—Not many nights ago the whole of a revival prayer-meeting was moved as the heart of one man by a noble-looking youth of eighteen, who, in the midst of his broken-hearted prayer, burst forth in the earnest supplication—"O God, bless my dear mother! I thank thee that thou hast heard her many prayers, and that I, so long the object of her love, have at last become the subject of thy grace!" And on the last night the feelings of every one present were again moved in like manner, by the testimony of a sailor in middle life, given, with sobs and tears, to the blessed influence of a mother's prayers in restraining a wayward son from sin, and in bringing him at length, by the grace of God, to the hope of salvation. Let the praying mother whose prayers seem not yet to be answered, take courage and exercise new faith in reference to the son of her love, from such proofs that praying breath is not spent in vain.

MATERNAL INFLUENCE.

UNDER God, almost everything depends on the MOTHER. It is not merely the sentiment of a Poet, that, "As the Twig is bent, the Tree's inclined," but inspiration speaks plainly and loudly on the subject. Early impressions are durable. Therefore, if the child be trained in the way he should go, "when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. xxii. 6.) I have generally found, in the case of wanderers, that when a reference has been made to the distress of a Mother, very strong feelings of remorse have been manifested. O, if Mothers maintained authority, with affection, it would be almost impossible that children should not be more or less impressed, because it is the plan of Wisdom, and suggested by Holy Writ.

As long as the name of Samuel's Mother, and as the name of Timothy's Mother shall be found in Scripture, so long will the duty your valuable publication would enforce, be evident to every attentive reader. I have lived to see great results, by the Divine blessing, on the Christian care, and tuition, and example of Mothers.—*W. Marsh, D.D.*

MOTHERS AND MEN.

That it is the mother who moulds the man is a sentiment beautifully illustrated by the following recorded observation of a shrewd writer:—

"When I lived among the Choctaw Indians, I held a consultation with one of their chiefs respecting the successive stages of their progress in the arts of civilized life; and among other things he informed me, that at their start they made a great mistake,—they only sent boys to school. These boys came home intelligent men; but they married uneducated and uncivilized wives, and the uniform result was, the children were all like their mothers. The father soon lost all his interest both in wife and children. 'And now,' said he, 'if we would educate but one class of our children, we should choose the girls; for, when they become mothers, they educate their sons.'"

This is the point, and it is true. No nation can become fully enlightened when mothers are not in a good degree qualified to discharge the duties of the home-work of education.

EVIL COMPANY.

It is said that Sophronius, a wise teacher of the people, did not allow his sons and daughters, even when they were grown up, to associate with persons whose lives were not moral and pure.

"Father," said the gentle Eulalia one day, when he had refused to permit her to go in company with her brother to visit the frivolous Lucinda, "you must think that we are very weak and childish, since you are afraid that it would be dangerous to us in visiting Lucinda."

Without saying a word the father took a coal from the hearth and handed it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child," said he; "only take it."

Eulalia took the coal, and behold her tender white hand was black and without thinking she touched her white dress, and it was also blackened. "See," said Eulalia, somewhat displeased, as she looked at her hands and dress, "one cannot be careful enough when handling coals."

"Yes, truly," said her father; "you see, my child, that the coal, even though it did not burn you, has nevertheless blackened you! So is the company of immoral persons."

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

CHILDREN, look into those eyes, listen to that dear voice, notice the feeling of even a single touch that is bestowed upon you by that gentle hand! Make much of it while yet you have that most precious of all good gifts—a loving mother. Read the unfathomable love of those eyes; the kind anxiety of that tone and look, however slight your pain. In after life you may have friends, fond, dear, kind friends, but never will you have again the inexpressible love and gentleness lavished upon you which none but a mother bestows. Often do I sigh in my struggles with the hard, uncaring world, for the sweet, deep security I felt, when of an evening, nestling to her bosom, I listened to some quiet tale, suitable to my age, read in her tender and untiring voice. Never can I forget her sweet glances cast upon me when I appeared asleep; never her kiss of peace at night. Years have passed away since we laid her beside my father in the old churchyard; yet still her voice whispers from the grave, and her eye watches over me as I visit spots long since hallowed to the memory of my mother.—*Macaulay*.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

MEDITATIONS ON THE HARTLEY COLLIERY ACCIDENT.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 9TH, 1862,
BY THE REV. T. ROWSELL,

AT ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, LOTHBURY.

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—MATT. xxiv., 40—42.

Our blessed Lord is speaking in these simple but solemn words of his great judgment upon Jerusalem. He is not speaking here of death; he is speaking of the time when the Son of Man should come upon the earth and shake the earth terribly, and the great judgment should overtake Jerusalem. Men should be unaware; they should be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and yet the trumpet of the Archangel, exceeding loud in all the great judgments that were sweeping over Jerusalem, should come there and sound, and sound in vain. He tells them that it should come upon them in an hour that they expected not. And yet, my brethren, these words ever suggest to us thoughts, not about Jerusalem, but about ourselves. That judgment was indeed one of the great judgments—the greatest that ever visibly took place upon the earth; but these words of our Lord, as often as we read them, suggest to us thoughts about our own death. We think of Him who said, I am he that liveth and was dead, and am alive for evermore, and hold the keys of Hades and of death. We think of our Lord speaking these words to us as referring to that hour when one shall be taken and the other left. Taken where, and left where. This is the solemn echo that goes on sounding in the depths of our spirit. Very little is said, if you notice—in fact, almost nothing in the New Testament—about our death—that is, as a warning. Death, indeed, is spoken of. Light is thrown across it. We know what it is, and we know what it is not, in the death of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, and in the death of his followers; but as a motive for warning, for fear, for anxiety, for preparedness, death is hardly ever, if at all, spoken of in the New Testament. Yet, my brethren, these words about judgment—the thought of Christ visiting the earth as he did, shaking the nations—coming forth, as it were, in the clouds of His glory, and manifesting himself to the nations of the world—making himself known and felt as the King of the Kingdoms of the world—revealing himself by his great judgments upon Jerusalem as the King that they had scourged and cast out, and who, even now, was asserting his power over them—on these things there are thoughts hidden and latent which are awakened in us by death. And, my brethren, death is always an awful thing, think of it as we will, under whatever light we may. The thoughts and words in the New Testament about judg-

The Mother's Magazine. March, 1862.

ment pass inward with us to the thought of death. In those days when men spoke and wrote as they were ordered by God's spirit, the thought of judgment included to their thoughts their death. Those who were alive, and those who were sleeping in Christ, were as one in the presence of their Lord. Then, indeed, that great judgment was not yet come; but now it has come, and yet the light of these words is as nothing—it is the light of the Spirit of Christ upon our hearts. We cannot, therefore, when we read any words about the judgment shut out from our minds the thoughts and the musings about our death. We must all appear—says St. Peter—before the judgment-seat of Christ; that is, we must all be made manifest before Christ's judgment-seat. We are being made manifest. God is continually judging, and yet His judgments that even now pass upon us are but the shadows of the great and abiding judgment of the most merciful Father in Heaven.

Well then, my brethren, speak of death as we will—whether we think of it as the silver chord that is loosed and the golden bowl that is broken, or the pitcher that is broken at the fountain—still it is the same; it is always fenced round to us with circumstances of great awe and many thoughtful and melancholy ponderings. We all feel when we think of death—"The one shall be taken and the other left"—that we leave those around us and with us; we know not how great may be the pain and the pang of separation. The eye wanders weakly, for the body is sinking, but oftentimes the spirit may be strong, and the thought turn to those that we seem to be leaving travelling on, as we are, to "that bourne from whence no traveller returns." My brethren, it does puzzle the will. We feel the strangeness, and we are sensible of the awfulness of it. Yes, we feel, somehow or another, that death is an end. It is an end of something, whatever the hereafter may be. It is an end of our plans. The work that we had in hand drops from the lifeless fingers. The spade and the mattock of the miner drop from his iron grasp, and the strong arm and the earnest will are, as it were, gone from us, and we see them no longer. The work that a man is planning; the busy scheming of his brain; the step in science that he intends to take upon the morrow, is stopped by death. At all events, his work which he had to do on earth is finished; though God reveals that we shall not pass as idlers into the blessed Kingdom of his Father, but that, in the "many mansions" of our Father in Heaven, there may be higher work than ever we wot of still to do; and these blessed and higher ministrations in the all-glorious Kingdom of our Father may reveal to us the little beginnings of the work that he permitted here, and the perfection and the policy of it hereafter. It may be, in a sense, far past our human understanding that they who sleep in Jesus rest from their labours, but still their works do follow them. No great work, no achievement, no blessed earnest of mercy, is cut short of its prosperity and its blessing; but the end may not be here, but there. The sowing time may be here, and the harvest in our Father's home.

When we see, for instance, any one who was lately alive, but now dead, we seem appalled. We are silent. We step quietly to the side. Our voice is hushed. Our feelings are humble. Our soul, as it were, trembles, and our heart yearns for the departed, so lately here, and now gone—and where—

WHERE! God will answer that question to us. Science fails, understanding drops helpless; but God's bright revelation tells us—with Him. He is our Father in Heaven; and the Lord Jesus tells us, "Where I am, there ye may be also." My brethren, if we ever stood beside the dead, we must have felt that here all the deepest feelings of our heart are stirred. We ask questions that have no replies. We have musings that go speedily out from us, but they have no end; they seem to lose themselves as an arrow shot up to the highest heaven, and never seem to come down again. Our thoughts fall not back on us, but they go speedily onwards towards God and the homes where those are who have passed from us.

But sudden death is particularly startling. There is something always very awful about sudden death—one taken and the other left—two in the same field of labour, we saw them go forth but only one returns; we are startled at the news. Two women grinding at the same mill, going through the labours, the ordinary duties of life, but the mill ceases to work, for only now one pair of hands is working it, and the other is taken away. It is always awful. We seem, as we think of it, to be standing upon the brink of some of the dimmest mysteries of our human existence. And yet, wherever we see it, O God, restrain us from passing any of our poor, wretched judgments upon these things. We are perfectly incapable—we do not know where we are—the moment we venture to pass judgment upon what God's blessed hand hath wrought in the world. My brethren, sometimes the thought of sudden death is very awful, because, where it affects us we seem to think, "Aye! but it may be our turn immediately." Moreover, to have seen one lately, whose face we knew, whose expression was familiar, who had taken his place in the work of life, and then, all of a moment, to find that there is a vacancy there, it is almost more than we can bear; so much so that if, in a few days hence, one should come and tell us that he, whom we knew had suddenly died, was at hand, we should not think it strange. It would all appear right. We should forget the interval of time, and the association with the departed would be so strong upon our mind, that nothing would appear strange which brought him back again.

"Landing from the plank of th' vessel,
On to the great shore of life again;"

as our great poet beautifully imaged it.

We sometimes feel as if we were afraid ourselves of sudden death. To die, as it were, in unpreparedness—to be taken just as we were, with our hands, as it were, still soiled with the work of life, and the brow perhaps still sweating with the labour of life—it seems such a sudden, awful thing, that we stand perhaps appalled. For some such reason, those who framed our ancient Litany included in it a prayer against sudden death. Perhaps it may have been that it is a human instinct, that flinches and shrinks from sudden death. Most would prefer that they should have time—hours, days, to think and pause and reflect; they think, perhaps, that a few days would make such a difference. These instincts may be very right and very holy; and yet, my brethren, there may be others again, who can hardly say that there is any selfish fear while they pray against sudden death—and, I confess, this feeling is always uppermost in my own mind.

It is rather because one thinks of those whom we leave; how it would startle them; what sudden agony; what bewilderment; what terrors; what anguish it would send, like a sudden thunderbolt, into the midst of a happy and united family. It is rather, in my own mind, the thought of the pang that it gives to others, than any idea of sudden death itself, as any mark whatever of God's anger against ourselves, or against others. It is a part and portion of a great and beloved Providence, as providential as any other death.

Then, too, it must always cause reflection, whenever we meet with such a sight. Now, for instance, an event in a distant northern county, of our great and busy country, has awakened us all. There is no one who has read about it—and, I suppose, there is not one who has not read or heard about the Hartley Colliery—there is no one but has turned, as it were, for some few moments, his face to the wall, and has turned from all things else, to have ponderings awakened through that event. Hearts have been stirred, troubled, and made to feel, that perhaps have not felt or been troubled for months or years. Oh, we get into a cold and formal way of life. We allow the duties and cares and riches of life, to have a very tremendous hold upon our spirits; and we often find ourselves emerging from a very selfish dream, and reproaching ourselves with our carelessness, our thoughtlessness, both about God and man. And we are ashamed in these times, when we hear the voice of God calling to us, and startling us with some event, and making us aware of His divine presence, and of the great mission of life which He doth send us to perform.

My brethren, there must be meaning in such an occurrence as that. It could not be for naught, that more than two hundred of our fellow creatures were suddenly taken from the very work of life. It could not be for naught, that widows and orphans made lamentation. There must be a purpose in it. May God's great and holy Spirit point out some of His divine purposes to us.

When an angel—though it be an angel of death—descends, as it were, from heaven, to trouble the waters, then every one seems to think of the disease which is on his own soul, of which he may be cured when he casts himself into the troubled pool of Bethesda. We take this event, each of us thinking of what we ourselves need be most anxious—what disease of our spirit needs to be cured? what lesson have we not need to learn? what providential warning should most sound in our ear? "What does that mean to me?" I think is the question that many a one is putting to his God in silence, and in careful communing with his Father in heaven.

The event itself, my brethren, was, indeed, very sad. You have read how, in the early dark of the morning, those labourers went from the village that was still, perhaps, lying in its sleep and quietness—where the mothers were to do their day's work, and prepare the little cottage—and the miners' cottages, let me tell you, are well kept, well furnished, and contain many comforts,—for the miners earn good wages. Their wives were there to prepare, perhaps, the evening meal, to which the miner comes so cheerfully from his gloomy toil, and from his hard, dark day's work. The men in this case seem to have been noble workers—a fine and glorious specimen of our English labourers—working hard, working long, working bravely for our comforts, that we may have a bright fire upon our

hearth, that our limbs may be unchilled, and ourselves and our children comforted and warmed. These men seem to have been workmen even of an unusually high kind. Most of them, I read, were Methodists. Thank God for those teachers who taught them that high and good thing; who put thoughts into their hearts, that in that terrible hour came forth by God's blessed mercy to sustain and to strengthen them.

If we only knew all the behind scenes of that strange morning, this text might come more vividly to our recollection. It may easily be that some who should have gone forth were too late to enter the mine. Some, again, may have been at a distance that day. Others may have been not well enough. Others may have had a holiday. For some reason or other, depend upon it, some workmen went not down with the usual gang of workmen, as it has been called. How strange must it have appeared to them when that terrible crash came, and they saw, with their experienced eye, the terrible and awful danger that their fellow-workmen were in; and when they knew at last that all was hopeless, that their brave fellow-workmen were gone and thrust from them for ever, how must they have thought and spoken one to another! Two working in the same mine these several years, and now one is taken and another left; what does it all mean? "Why is my poor friend gone, and how is it that I am still left here in the bright air of heaven, and my poor comrade has sunk down in the dark poisonous gases in the womb of the earth?" Oh, my brethren, God knows how all this may have entered into many of the poor miners minds, for it was a terrible hour. There they were, down beneath the earth—you have read it all; I need not harrow your feelings. You will never forget as long as you live the reading of that time, when noble, anxious men came and threw themselves into the arms of death, and, in spite of all the dangers that they were warned of, could not be kept back for a moment from working day and night while their health and strength could last, working even when it was with faint hope—working when every moment, every digging of the earth, might bring some poisonous gas to themselves; working downwards—working gradually towards those poor men who were under the earth.

And the thoughts of those men, who must have heard their fellow-workers, and knew what they were doing, even to the last! Oh, what a comfort it is that there steal to upper air some beautiful gleams of the light of God's mercy that sped into the hearts of the miners—two or three faint tokens, faint at first, but read, under the light of God's mercy, in upper air, these faint tracings of their dying hands show that they prayed, that one or two still spoke words of exhortation even unto the last. My brethren, these faint tracings come out like words written in milk; when put before the fire they come out burning. And these words, written in the darkness of the earth, come out from under the furnace of affliction bright, and clear, and beautiful. We know what these men were thinking of, and we know who put it into their hearts. We know that there was the blessed Spirit of God dealing with them—that He, himself, was strengthening and comforting them, even in that terrible hour—that they may have remembered those glorious words, "I will not leave you comfortless." And even beside those who had to pass through the dreadful furnace of affliction we seem to see, through the vision of faith, the form of the Son of Man walking with them, and His blessing passing

on them, so that they seem to pass to their God though their bodies sink to the dust.

I cannot pretend, my dear brethren, to understand the meaning of this great calamity. I cannot say what, in the great, divine education of our fellow-beings in all the world, may be God's intention—what may be His divine and blessed purpose in permitting these great calamities. I am sure that we shall never, perhaps, define in this life what place these serious calamities occupy in the great education and fashioning of the children of men for their Father's kingdom; but some great purpose of mercy they must carry out, for, whatever else may puzzle me, whatever else is dark, this is clear, that my God is love, and these calamities must be a portion of that heavenly love, which, though doubtful here, to our spirits will be fully revealed in the fulness of His kingdom. I am sure, therefore, that we are intended to learn some lessons—a very few it occurs to my mind to suggest to you. You may have thought many more, and better ones, for yourselves, but it may always be good to ponder over them together.

All who have the opportunity, the knowledge, the science, are set, I think, from this sorrow, upon ascertaining how far we bring these sorrows upon ourselves entirely, and then try and put them upon God's providence. All that I mean by God's providence in the case is this, that He may be watching over the spirits of men; but He sets us laws, and has set the laws of the universe, and whose dashes against them must be ground to powder. We must, therefore, see how far we tempt the Lord our God, and enter into those dangers which overwhelm us by the very laws of danger. All labour and all search must move within providential laws. The poor, especially the labouring poor—the miners, and all those who work in the darkness of the earth—are often wonderfully ignorant of those laws under whose control they seem to exist almost every moment of their lives. Surely, therefore, troubles and calamities like these should teach us—though, in this case, the men seem to have violated no law whatever—that it is our duty, wherever we can, to teach all who labour the laws of that labour into which they enter. We are by no means sure, indeed, that those who held the mine may not have unconsciously violated some law through negligence or through stint. I hope and believe that such men will be eager that their miners and workmen should know more of the physical laws that surround them—should be taught them as early as they can be taught anything—that so, at all events, knowing these, they may often escape the danger, and may have the laws to serve them, instead of themselves being the victims of the violated laws of God's natural providence. And, again, it may be that capital has been too much stinted. The gold of Ophir may be more in some capitalists eyes than the lives of their fellow-creatures, and they may unwarrantably, or, at all events, heedlessly, risk the lives of their fellow-men in order that there may be a larger percentage upon the capital.

Yes, my brethren, it may be that such a dreadful calamity as this may save in the end myriads of human lives. There will be, I believe, a most careful investigation, and so numbers may be preserved, and we may see and learn more of God's providence in earth, in air, and sky, and, thinking of this, we may be led on to think of those higher laws of God's revelations—the laws of our spirit—which

as the laws we see around us, are His laws, and against which, if we dash, we must be victims too. There is a deeper perishing than in the mine. There is something even more sacred than the noble framework of these good workers. My brethren, there is a spirit within us, and there are laws of God, which he has revealed to us, which, if we ourselves violate, we know that we, too, may perish, and perish much more miserably than those men did. It is a more terrible thing to have the spirit within me perishing, and sinking down in a dreary abode, than it is to have my body there. It is a more horrible thing for me to be sunk down in my lusts and passions than it is to have my body chained or manacled.

And, then, too, I believe that thousands have been made very serious by this calamity, and very anxious to live more preparedly. As they have thought of it they have anxiously asked themselves, "Am I prepared if one be taken and another left?" Then, too, you can hardly fail to have thought that brotherly love has been wonderfully called out. My brethren, every gift that has been given—every sympathy that has passed from our spirits—every thought that our prayer may be answered, and we will do all we can that it shall be answered (and there are many who have cried to God to provide for the fatherless children and widows)—has been an acknowledgment that these men are our brethren, and that these widows and orphans are our sisters and our brethren. We may sometimes forget this blessed truth, or only acknowledge it in words, but events like this tell it in soberness and in truth.

Then, too, the union of the rich and the poor is brought out wonderfully by these troubles. Oftentimes we hear it said that the rich are heartless about the poor. Sometimes we hear great demagogues addressing large meetings in the north, and trying to set one class against another, and to impress upon the labouring class that their highest interest is to hold themselves as antagonists to the capitalist and to the rich. And yet, when these calamities occur, all disunion is bridged over, and we feel the falsehood of these remarks, and we know that, however thoughtless rich men may be at times—and they are—they might do more, God knows—but it is often from a want of thought, more than a want of heart—their thoughtlessness is swept away, and the best feelings of the English heart are brought out by the sorrows and calamities of the labouring poor. No sooner does any public sorrow overtake our labouring poor than their rich brethren haste to the rescue, go in amongst them, help them, weep over them, pour out their wealth in such floods of charity, that it would seem as though the rod from God's hand had struck the rock, and the waters gushed out plentifully. And, my brethren, that may do good—it must do good. When such men have been merciful to the poor their mercy comes back upon themselves, and makes them better men, and more awake to charitable duties, and to their brotherhood with the labouring poor; and the labouring classes will be slow to believe, when they see these classes hasten towards them, in that cruel political economy of those who make a trade of their politics—will be slow to listen to the demagogues' words that tell them that the rich and the poor are enemies. No, they know that in this rich, old, happy country of ours, in spite of all our faults—and we have many—there is an English heart that beats true to Christ and true to our fellow men.

And once more. You must have noticed in the list of subscriptions how many,

many pounds, and ten pounds, and shillings, and smaller coins, have been gathered together by the labouring poor themselves. Over and over again, such and such a number of workmen have clubbed together, and have sent in a contribution from their hard earnings, to help, feed and clothe the widows and orphans of their poor fellow labourers. They never saw them; never knew of them. Many hardly know what a miner is; but they send gladly their help. My brethren, these are lessons, I think, that will do us all good. I noticed even children sending their little allowances. I saw, even yesterday, that the boys at the Bluecoat School had clubbed together—and they are not rich boys, as you know—and, if I remember rightly, they sent their ten guineas as a donation to the fund for the poor widows of the Hartley colliers. Those boys and children, whose parents and friends put them in the way of exercising this mercy, will feel, as they grow up, that it did make their hearts tender—glad to give up their own little luxuries and pleasures—learning in early life the divine luxury of doing good, and of feeling that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

These sudden events make us all pause, and think whether we are ready. Oh, Christian brother, surely "God hath spoken, and let all the earth keep silence before Him." Not that a few passing sentiments—not that sermons should sound forth from every pulpit—not for anything passing, but for something that is to remain—is God speaking to us. I would ask myself, I would ask you, not to be satisfied with feelings, but let those feelings pass into action. Are we halting in our life? then that sudden event tells us there is no time to be lost. Why waste ye the day? Are we idling over the duties of life? Are we sinning? Is there any sin that we have been living in, that clings to us like a cerement? Is there anything that our consciences accuse us of? My brethren, if there is, that single summons, that comes to us like a sudden sound from the mountain, tells us to stand still and then to kneel before our God, and ask him, while it is yet time, that we may cast that sin behind us, and that we may go to our blessed Saviour for safety and deliverance from our sins.

Oh, brethren, have we not seen it in life—two fellow-workmen going to work in the same field? Have we not seen, too, the wife and the husband going the social round of life together, and one is taken and the other left? And oh, the home how different! Oh, what a change in the home, when this great sorrow comes! Have we not seen—will you not see it to-morrow—two fellow clerks going to the same counting-house—to the same work in life—but it is only God who sees the difference between the two. The motives of the one may be as different from the motives of the other, as heaven from hell. The outward aspect is the same, but in the eye of God one is taken from him, and the other is in the arms of Christ, doing Christ-like duties, and living an earnest and a righteous life. Oh, my brethren, think you, had we been in that terrible crisis! Put yourselves in the place of those poor workers who died. Let me ask my God to-night, and do you ask him, too, what should you and I have wished in those hours that passed when no one could reach us, and sorrow was nigh at hand? What should we have wished had been different in our lives in the last few weeks that had passed? What should we have wished we had left undone—what should we have wished we had done? Might we not have remembered, "Oh, that sin, how was it I came to commit it? Oh, that the earth would hide me, and the mountains cover me. I seem afraid of my God, instead of peaceful and quiet in going to Him. My conscience trembles? "Why did I not forgive that person? I loitered and hesitated, and I went on in an unforgiving spirit; and now I have no spirit to pray Christ forgive me for my own unforgiving heart." Come down unto the darkness here, oh brother. Put it to yourself. Ask God's spirit to point out to us what we should wish different, if even this night one be taken and the other left. Oh, let not this Divine voice of Jesus die away in mere distant sounds, but watch, as our Lord tells us. Watch, for ye know not the day nor the hour when the Lord shall call us to finish our earthly work. Oh, that whether present or absent, we may be with Him—that when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, His hand and His staff may comfort us.

Sketches and Essays.

THE MANIAC MOTHER.

PARENTS cannot, it is true, absolutely ensure the Christian character of their children. But a great deal of parental neglect is excused on this plea. It is far wiser to draw largely on God's promises, and expect much from him, believing that the great Parent of all, who is like a father pitying his children, will recognise and bless parental solicitude. Using the means, we may believingly expect the end. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

If I have drawn one lesson from the teaching of experience, of the sad consequences that may result from the absence of Christian education, I could turn to many other pages of the volume of experience for lessons of an encouraging character, exhibiting the blessing that follows upon Christian education. Out of one hundred and twenty Christian ministers assembled together at a conference, upwards of one hundred affirmed that they were indebted to maternal influence, as the human means, for the first dawnings of their piety. The following is an extract from a book which should be in the hands of every mother and every child—"Truth made simple, and Lectures to Children." The writer, the Rev. John Todd, thus narrates his own experience:—"In this life we can never know how many spirits of just men made perfect now reign in heaven in consequence of the faithfulness of their mothers. The most devoted Christians on earth are those who have been led to Christ by a mother's love and faithfulness. You can hardly be aware how deep may be the impression which you may make on the mind of your child, even in a very few moments of time. For one, I can truly say, I have never met with any loss so great, as that of losing the care and instructions of my mother during my childhood, in consequence of her having lost her reason. But I can recollect that, when a very little child, I was standing at the open window, at the close of a lovely summer's day. The large, red sun was just sinking

The Mother's Magazine. April, 1862.

away behind the western hills; the sky was gold and purple commingled; the winds were sleeping, and a soft, solemn stillness seemed to hang over the earth. I was watching the sun, as he sent his yellow rays through the trees, and felt a kind of awe, though I knew not wherefore. Just then my mother came to me. She was raving with frenzy—for reason had long since left its throne, and her—a victim of madness. She came up to me, wild with insanity. I pointed to the glorious sun in the west, and in a moment she was calm. She took my little hands within hers, and told me that ‘the great God made the sun, the stars, the world—everything; and he it was who made her little boy, and gave him an immortal spirit; that yonder sun, and the green fields, and the world itself, will one day be burned up; but that the spirit of her child will then be alive, for he must live when heaven and earth are gone; that he must pray to the great God, and love and serve him for ever! She let go my hands—madness returned—she hurried away. I stood with my eyes filled with tears, and my bosom heaving with emotion, which I could not have described; but I can never forget the impressions which that conversation of my poor mother left upon me. Oh what a blessing would it have been, had the inscrutable providence of God given me a mother who could have repeated these instructions, accompanied by her prayers, all the days of my childhood! But, ‘even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.’ Mothers! if, when the sorrows of life shall be over—the world have passed away—if you stand on Mount Sion above, with your children around you, able to say, ‘Here, Father, am I, and here are the children which thou hast given me: of those whom thou gavest me have I lost none;’ and shall hear him say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful,’ would you exchange that hour for all that ever entered into the heart of man?”

Mark the contrast. To stand on Mount Sion above, able to say, “Here, Father, am I, and here are the children which thou hast given me!” or to meet your children before the judgment-seat, and hear from their lips the overwhelming rebuke, “You never told me to do any good!”

“Mother! to thy heart are given
Rich and precious gifts from heaven,
Not to be thine own for ever,
Not to save thee hard endeavour;—
Souls for thee to guide and cherish,
Teach, that so they may not perish.”

THE WALL OF SNOW.

WHEN the year 1814 began, troops of Swedes, Cossacks, Germans, and Russians, were within half an hour's march of the town of Sleswick; and new and fearful reports of the behaviour of the soldiers were brought from the country every day. There had been a truce, which was to come to an end at midnight of the 5th of January, which was now drawing near. On the outskirts of the town, on the side where the enemy lay, there was a house standing alone, and in it there was an old pious woman, who was earnestly praying, in the words of an ancient hymn, that God would raise up a wall around them, so that the enemy might fear to attack them. In the same house dwelt her daughter, a widow, and her grandson, a youth of twenty years. He heard the prayer of his grandmother, and could not restrain from saying, that he did not understand how she could ask for anything so impossible as that a wall should be built around them which could keep the enemy away from their house. The old woman, who was now deaf, caused what her grandson said to be explained to her, but only answered that she had prayed in general for protection for themselves and their townspeople. "However," she added, "do you think that if it were the will of God to build a wall around us, it would be impossible to him?" And now came the dreaded night of the 5th of January; and about midnight the troops began to enter on all sides. The house we were speaking of lay close by the road, and was larger than the dwellings near it which were only very small cottages. Its inhabitants looked out with anxious fear, as parties of the soldiers entered one after another, and even went to the neighbouring houses to ask for what they wanted; but all rode past their dwelling. Throughout the whole day there had been a heavy fall of snow—the first that winter—and towards evening the storm became violent to a degree seldom known. At length came four parties of Cossacks, who had been hindered by the snow from entering the town by another road. This part of the outskirts was at some distance from the town itself, and therefore they would not go farther, so that all the houses around that in which the old woman lived were filled with soldiers, who quartered themselves in them; in several houses there were fifty or sixty of these half-savage men. It was a terrible night for those who dwelt in this part of the town, filled to overflowing with the troops of

the enemy. But not a single soldier came into the grandmother's house; and amidst the loud noises and wild sounds all around, not even a knock of the door was heard, to the great wonder of the family within. The next morning, as it grew light, they saw the cause. The storm had drifted a mass of snow to such a height between the road side and the house, that to approach it was impossible. "Do you not now see, my son," said the old grandmother, "that it was possible for God to raise a wall around us?"

THE WANT OF CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE A FATAL WANT.

It is the want of this life in the parents, this kind of example, which chiefly accounts for the apparent fruitlessness of what seemed to be a home Christian education. It was not Christian. The Christian words, and phrases, and forms, may possibly have been there, but, nevertheless, death reigned. There was no Christian life. On the other hand, there has often been wanting in families anything like good religious teaching by word or book; for the parents had not in early life the advantages of good education, or they did not possess the art of imparting what they know, or had possibly a painful difficulty in expressing their thoughts or feelings. But they were nevertheless really loving and pious. The children felt their influence, like light and warmth, which came, they hardly knew from whence, whether in the mother's look or smile, or in the father's voice or fireside life; yet everywhere diffused in the house, and which accompanied them like a presence when they left home and while they lived. "I do not know," said a young person once to me, "what there was about my father, but without speaking a word, his influence upon me was like magic. He always seemed to me to be in the presence of some one whom others did not see, and to possess in his mind and heart what gave him a peace and patience different altogether from what I saw in others, or found in myself. I felt him awing me, yet drawing me to him, and drawing me out of myself to God. I cannot remember distinctly any one thing he ever said, or any particular conversation, as having been the special means of doing me good. But what he was moulded me, under God, from childhood, to what I am."

There are one or two practical applications of this truth which I would press upon the earnest attention of parents

1. Let them carefully weigh their personal responsibility for what they themselves are, and therefore for the influence which thus they cannot choose but exercise upon the character of their children. It is quite true that they "cannot answer for their children," as the phrase is; but they must do so for themselves, and thus indirectly answer for them also.

2. See how much easier, simpler, as well as absolutely essential, it is to be good, by giving the heart to God, than trying to speak and act only like one who is good. How different is life from every imitation of it! How much better it is to open the eye and see all things, than with shut eyes to endeavour to walk and work as if in light!

3. Consider the dreadful selfishness of sin, when, rather than be decided in religion to know God, to do his will in all things, parents will run the risk even, and bear the thought, not only of losing their own souls, but of losing the souls of their children.—*Norman M'Leod, D.D.*

CROOKED SPINES IN GIRLS.

It is a sad fact, that nearly every young lady in fashionable life has lateral curvature of the spine. This comes on at the age of ten or eleven, and continues slowly but steadily to increase, unnoticed even by a mother's watchful eye, till the child is really deformed; one shoulder is much larger and higher than the other, and one hip higher, so that the dressmaker is obliged to put cotton in the dress, to make the back look flat and square.

The boys, their brothers, have no such trouble, why should they? The question may well be asked by every thoughtful parent. I answer that improper dress and other physiological errors, in which girls constantly indulge, produce this mischief. The dress of the girl is always tighter than her brother's, and this is done while she is quite young, "to give her a form," the mother says, as if God did not do this when he made the child.

This constant pressure upon the muscles of the spine which are designed to keep it straight, causes absorption of those muscles, and as the right arm is used more than the left, the spine is drawn under the right shoulder blade, thus making it project. The muscles are so weakened by absorptions, they cannot bring the spine to its proper position, and you have a case of lateral curvature.

In addition to this tight dress, I have seen girls of thirteen or fourteen with corsets on. Often these are adopted by thoughtless mothers, in the hope to straighten the child, but under their cruel pressure the difficulty rapidly increases, till the poor deformed girl is sent to a spinal institution to be treated. While this difficulty is gradually increasing, the young girl is sent to school, to spend five or six hours each day, bending over a low desk, and when she returns home, instead of being allowed to play ball, or any other active game in the open air, as her brothers are, is placed on a high piano stool, where her toes but just touch the floor, with nothing to protect her back. In this position she must sit one long and painful hour.

Do you wonder she has a crooked spine? I wonder that any escape, for all are obliged to pass through the same killing ordeal.—*Lewis's Gymnastics.*

UNGODLY MARRIAGES.

“Be ye not unequally yoked.”—2 Cor. vi. 14.

THIS was the particular sin for which God drowned the old world.

Some of Lot's daughters married in Sodom, and perished in the overthrow.

Both Ishmael and Esau married irreligiously, and were both rejected, and turned persecutors.

The first blasphemer that was stoned by God's command is marked as an offspring of one of these marriages: his mother had espoused an Egyptian.

The first captivity of the Jews, after their settlement in the Holy Land, is ascribed to this cause. The whole passage is very instructive. It is said that the remains of the nations “were to prove Israel, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses. And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites, and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of

Chushan-rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years."

David married the daughter of Talmai, King of Geshur, by whom he had Absalom, the disgrace and curse of his family.

The case of Solomon is a warning to all ages.

His son Rehoboam, that lost the ten tribes, sprang from one of these forbidden marriages: his mother was an Ammonitess.

The marriage of Ahab is thus awfully noticed:—"And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. But there was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel, his wife, stirred up."

What was it that Ezra so grievously lamented, and so sharply reproved? It was, that "the holy seed had mingled themselves with the people of the land."

And what says the zealous reformer, Nehemiah? "Their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon, King of Israel, sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no King like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless, even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?"

"Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after all things as they also lusted."

MRS. WESLEY AND HER CHILDREN.

MRS. WESLEY was assiduous in teaching her children their duty to God, and to their parents. She had nineteen children, most of whom lived to be educated. All these were educated by herself! Their times of going to bed, rising in the morning, dressing, eating, learning, and exercise, she managed by rule; which was never suffered to

be broken. From her, Mr. John Wesley derived all that knowledge in the education of children, which he has detailed so simply, and so successfully enforced. It has been considered, that a man who had no children of his own, could not have known so well how they should be managed, and educated; but that wonder will at once cease, when it is recollected who was his instructress in all things, during his infancy and youth.

Mrs. Wesley had little difficulty in breaking the wills of her children. They were early brought by rational means, under a mild yoke; they were perfectly obsequious to their parents, and were taught to wait their decision in everything they were to have and perform. They were taught also, to ask a blessing upon their food, to behave quietly at family prayers, and to reverence the sabbath.

They were never permitted to command the servants, to use any words of authority, in their addresses to them. Mrs. Wesley charged the servants to do nothing for any of the children, unless they asked it with humility and respect; and the children were duly informed, that the servants had such orders. "Molly—Robert, be pleased to do so and so," was the usual method of request, both from the sons and daughters; and because the children behaved thus decently, the domestics revered and loved them; were strictly attentive to, and felt it a privilege to serve them.

They were never permitted to contend with each other: whatever difficulties arose, the parents decided, and their decision was never disputed. The consequence was, there were few misunderstandings among them, and no unbrotherly or vindictive passions; and they had the common fame, of being the most loving family in the county of Lincoln.

How much evil may be prevented, and how much good may be done, by judicious management in the education of children!

Mrs. Wesley has explained her own views and conduct, in a letter, dated July 24th, 1732, part of which is here given:—"In order to form the minds of children, the first thing to be done, is to conquer their will, and bring them to an obedient temper. To inform the understanding is a work of time, and must with children proceed by slow degrees, as they are able to bear it; but the subjecting the will is a thing that must be done at once, and the sooner the better; for by neglecting timely correction, they will contract a stubbornness and obstinacy, which are hardly ever after conquered, and never without using such severity as would be as painful to me as to the

child. In the esteem of the world, they pass for kind and indulgent, whom I call cruel parents ; who permit their children to get habits which they know must be afterwards broken. Nay, some are so stupidly fond, as in sport to teach their children to do things, which in awhile afterwards, they have severely beaten them for doing. When a child is corrected, it must be conquered, and this will be no hard matter to do, if it be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. And when the will of a child is totally subdued, and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of its parents, then, a great many childish follies and inadvertencies must be passed by—some should be overlooked, and taken no notice of; and others mildly reproved: but no sinful transgression ought ever to be forgiven children, without chastisement less or more, as the nature and circumstances of the offence may require. I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents, till its own understanding comes to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so, whatever cherishes this in children, insures their after wretchedness and irreligion; whatever checks and mortifies it, promotes their future happiness and piety."

So wise, judicious, and affectionate a mother, was worthy of those illustrious sainted sons, the influence of whose learning and piety, will bless mankind to the latest posterity.

LEIGH RICHMOND'S MOTHER.

IN the interesting Memoirs of Leigh Richmond, the following passage occurs, strikingly descriptive of the beneficial effect produced upon his mind by the instructions and admonitions of a beloved parent. "I well remember, in the early dawn of my expanding reason, with what care she laboured to instil into my mind a sense of the being of God, and of the reverence which is due to him; of the character of a Saviour, and his infinite merits; of the duty of prayer, and the manner in which it ought to be offered up at the throne of grace. Her way of enforcing these subjects was like one who felt their importance, and wished her child to do so likewise. First instructed

by her to read, I have not forgotten, in my Bible lessons, with what simplicity and propriety she used to explain and comment on the word of God, its precepts and examples. These infantine catechetical exercises still vibrate in my recollections, and confirm to my own mind the great advantage attendant upon the earliest possible endeavours to win the attention, and store the memory with religious knowledge. Her natural abilities, which were of a superior character, enabled her to converse with a very little child with much effect ; and there was a tenderness of affection, united to a firmness of manner, which greatly promoted the best interests of a nursery education.

“ My mother had six children, three of whom died in infancy. A very affecting circumstance accompanied the death of one of them, and was a severe trial to her maternal feelings. Her then youngest child, a sweet little boy, just two years old, was, through the carelessness of his nurse, precipitated from a bed-room window upon the pavement beneath. I was at that time six years of age, and happened to be walking on the very spot, when the distressing event occurred; I was, therefore, the first to take up, and deliver into our agonized mother's arms, the poor little sufferer. The head was fractured, and he only survived the fall about thirty hours. I preserve still a very distinct and lively remembrance of the struggle between the natural feelings of the mother, and the spiritual resignation of the Christian. She passed the sad interval of suspense in almost continual prayer, and found God a present help in time of trouble. Frequently, during that day, did she retire with me ; and, as I knelt beside her, she uttered the feelings and desires of her heart to God. I remember her saying, ‘ If I cease praying for five minutes, I am ready to sink under this unlooked-for distress ; but when I pray, God comforts and upholds me : his will, not mine, be done.’ Once she said, ‘ Help me to pray, my child, Christ suffers little children to come to him, and forbids them not—say something.’ ‘ What shall I say, mama, shall I fetch a book ?’ ‘ Not now,’ she replied, ‘ speak from your heart ; and ask God that we may be reconciled to his will, and bear this trial with patience.’

“ The day after the infant's death, she took me to the bed on which my little brother lay, and kneeling down, she wept for a few minutes in silence, and then taking his cold hand in one of her's, and mine in the other, she said, ‘ Lord, if it had not been thy good pleasure, it had not been thus. Thy will be done ! I needed

this heavy trial, to show me more of myself, and to wean me from the world. Forgive my sins, O God, and let me not murmur.' Then looking at the cherub countenance of her babe, she added, 'Thou art not lost, but gone before!' She then put his hand into mine, and said, 'If you live, my child, never forget this; and may I one day meet you both in heaven!'

"I have dwelt upon this part of my dear parent's history with the more minuteness, because she has frequently told me, that it was not only the greatest shock which her feelings were ever called upon to sustain, but that she was persuaded it was over-ruled by God for the most salutary purpose, as it concerned the spiritual discipline of her own heart. To the end of her life, she wore a little locket attached to her watch; it contained a lock of her poor little Henry's hair, and she often looked at it, and spoke of it, as a remembrance of God's goodness to her at a most trying season."

DON'T SCOLD.

Don't scold! No good or useful thing is ever accomplished by scolding; but many and great evils are effected by it. It is a most unlovely and unfortunate thing for any one to scold, but most of all, it is so for mothers. The temptations to it are very great. It is hard work to avoid it. And yet so unamiable and dangerous is the habit, and so inveterate does it become by indulgence, that to correct it is worth any effort, however severe; any sacrifice; however great.

Don't scold, mothers! Weep—suffer—pray; but don't scold. If there must be scolding, let some one else do it. Let the husband do it, or the neighbours do it, or even the children, but don't you. It puts out of tune the sweet harmonies of domestic life, and vibrates harsh discords. It disturbs the calm serenity of home, and chafes like some sullen tide. Don't scold!

Most of all, don't scold at the children. And that is almost equivalent to saying, do not scold at all. For at whom do people scold but at the children? It spoils children. It never corrects their faults, but trains them to new, and often to worse ones. It sours their temper. It is a perpetual blaming them, when frequently they do not deserve it; and even when they do, often a gentle word would be a severer reproof and a more certain remedy. Children often deserve to be punished, but never to be scolded.

It fosters the same habit in the child. The mother is the instructor of her children. Let her be careful what lessons she gives, what examples she sets before them. Some lessons are more easily learned than others; none more easily than that of scolding. And the child that hears it often will soon become skilful in the practice upon playthings and associates, and be prepared to take her place at the head of a household, herself a scolding mother. Don't scold!

But it is hard work not to scold! Yes, certainly. And the provocations to it are very many and very great! That is true. Who can help it, with so much to do, and so much to bear? Let each mother answer for herself, and be ready to say, there is one at least who can withstand the temptation, and avoid the evil, whatever the occasion. The mother is to be pitied, sympathised with, and encouraged. The mother must not be scolded even when she scolds.

Weary and worn down, half sick and discouraged, vexed and hurried, but little time, but little strength, and a world of work and care—then to be teased, to be interrupted, to be disobeyed! And when gentle words, once, twice, thrice spoken, will effect nothing! What can one do then? Anything—or nothing? But don't scold! Speak one gentle word more, or speak sternly if that be needed. Pray for strength to endure and to conquer; only don't scold.

And then the influence is so unfortunate on those who do it. They are so out of patience with themselves for it; feel so mortified to think they could allow themselves in it; so much regret to see a fixed habit of fretfulness at those they love the best, destroying their sweetness of temper, and gaining the mastery over them; and most of all, perhaps sorry to see the children growing unlovely from the example, that the storm destroys the peace of mind within, long after it has ceased to disturb the scenes without.

Mothers, don't scold! Talk, reason, explain, endure, persuade, punish; but don't scold!

A THOUGHTFUL writer gives this lesson to parents, which cannot be conned over too thoughtfully: "You are always educating your children for good or evil. Not only by what you say, but by what you do; not only by what you intend, but by what you are—you yourself are one constant lesson, which many eyes are observing, and which many a heart receives into itself. Influence, power, impulse, are ever going out from you. Take care, then, how you act.

THE CORRECTION OF CHILDREN.

IN relation to the treatment of children at this period of life, the point which of all others will be found to task parental judgment and discrimination most, is how to order the discipline of correction or reproof. The discipline itself must, of course, begin from the very earliest period. Even from the cradle, as we have seen, we must try to break the ascendancy of the infant will. But as years advance, the task becomes more difficult; and it is often only at a large cost of parental feeling, that the waywardness of the youthful heart can be reduced to subjection, and the twig bent as we would have the tree incline. Still the sacrifice must be made. For as to that foolish lenity which is shown by some parents, it is scarcely necessary to say that it receives from Scripture nothing but the most unmeasured reprobation. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son." (Prov. xiii. 24). "The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." (Prov. xxix. 15). "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." (Prov. xix. 18). "Adonijah was a spared child. "His father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?" (1 Kings i. 6); and yet see what requital he made for his mistaken tenderness. Hophni and Phinehas were sons left to themselves and the consequence was that they brought down the grey hairs of their father with sorrow to the grave.

But then, mark, on the other hand, how carefully holy Scripture defines the limit of this corrective discipline: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," (Eph. vi. 4 :) and again, in the Epistle to the Colossians, "Fathers provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged," (Col. iii. 21 ;) that is, as the word imports lest they be put out of heart, become broken in spirit, have all the vigour and life taken out of them. Let us see what forms of correction seem to be here forbidden:—

1. Thus the language may be taken to forbid all angry and intemperate correction. What a reproach to many Christian parents is that saying of a Heathen to one who had offended, "If I were not angry I would chastise thee!" Let all parents exercise a godly jealousy in this matter. Children are quick to discover the flushed look and perturbed manner of a passionate father; and however much they may dread, they have no respect for his correction. They

know it is too hot to have any justice in it, and too revengeful to be dictated by any feeling of parental love. And thus, as a remedial measure, as a wholesome restraint upon a repetition of the misdoing, the punishment is wholly effectless. It is felt to be the wild tyranny of a strong arm, giving vent to its capricious indignation, without temper, without mercy, and without law.

2. Again, these prohibitions of the apostle extend to that cold, distant and forbidding demeanour, which some fathers think essential to the maintenance of parental authority ; but which, in effect, turns the reverence of children into slavish fear. After an offence is committed especially is this felt. For your countenance wears so long its dark and repelling frown, that the last resolution the delinquent child will form will be to say, "I will arise and go unto my father." Oh, beware how you thus freeze up the warm spring of filial tenderness and affection ! The child's instinct is to love and trust you : and some rude violence has been done to that instinct, if, in peace, he have greater joy than in a father's smile ; or, in trouble, have a nearer sanctuary than a father's heart.

3. But these are negative directions. What suggestions are to be offered towards a plan of temperate, judicious, and yet firm and effectual correction ? Of these some are obvious and general ; as, for instance, that all correction be administered upon principles of the most righteous fairness. It must commend itself to the child's natural equities, as a penalty for the infringement of some known law ; as enforced without any respect of persons ! as dealt out on some measured principle of retribution, and not according to any sliding scale of fitfulness, and impulse, and caprice. Especially must it be felt that there is one law alike to all. The showing favour to one child more than another, as it is always the dishonour, so it is generally the ruin, of all parental authority. And he who makes "a coat of many colours," to show his love for one son, may look forward to a future of confusion, misrule, and misery, from the excited envy of the rest.

Again, it should always be apparent to children that you are driven to the use of correction by a loving necessity—by the affection you bear to their souls. "God doth not willingly afflict the children of men," and the children of men should not willingly afflict each other. "He for our profit," is the governing rule of all our heavenly Father's chastisement ; and, as far as he can apply it, it should be the rule to

an earthly father also. At all events, correct your children, not in measure only, but in sorrow. Let them see that whenever you afflict their souls with whips, you are at the same time afflicting your own with scorpions.

4. But a more important direction for the administering of reproof is to be given, founded on the law of dealing with offenders, laid down by our Lord himself: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." (Matt. xviii. 15.) Here is an excellent model for parental reproofs. First, let a little time elapse after the wrong is done, to give opportunity for reflection. An intimation of displeasure may be given on the instant; but the actual calling to account may be postponed, as with the first human offenders, till the close of the day. By this method, no place for suspicion is left, in the child's mind, of hastiness or sudden anger; every thing wears the aspect of calm and well-considered deliberation, whilst the fact of your waiting so long gives a prepossession in favour of your forbearing and patient love.

But the other part of our Lord's rule is very important also: "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone." It should be a great point with you never to expose an offending child to needless humiliation, not only because it tends to induce a complacent and self-righteous feeling in the brothers and sisters who are looking on, but because it is a great hinderance to the workings of the penitential spirit in the delinquent himself. The mortified pride which kicks against the pricks, in the presence of others, will often yield to the piercing when alone. And many a child, I am persuaded, has stifled and overcome his feelings of contrition, because he could not bear that those around him should see the tear. But let him be alone with his father—let him feel that the only eyes to witness his shame are those of compassion, and kindness, and gentle love; and in a little time he will be humbled. You will see his stubborn spirit giving way. The coals of a loving fire are doing their melting work upon him. You will not pursue your advantage too far. The reed is bruised. The flax smokes. It is the kind word that is wanting now; and this spoken, you will both kneel down together; and as the child rises from prayer, he feels that his sin is blotted from his father's remembrance, and he hopes from the books of heaven.—
"Family Duties," by the Rev. Daniel Moore.

FRAGMENT BASKET.

LOVES, YET WHIPS :—One day my little boy was weeping very bitterly ; upon my inquiring the reason, he said, " Mother has been whipping me." To try him I asked, " Then does mother love you ?" Presently he ceased crying, a shade crossed his countenance, but only for a moment, when he replied, " Yes, mother loves her little boy ; I did it before, and she told me not to do it again ; but I forgot ; so she has only whipped me to make me think on—she wants me to grow a good man." So saying, off he scampered to solicit a kiss, and soon a joyous voice announced the fact—" Yes, mother loves me !" Let us, dear reader, seek to have that confidence in our heavenly Father which that child reposed in its earthly parent—that faith which enabled it to see in chastisement nothing but maternal solicitude for its future welfare—that love which will also prompt us under the smart of affliction to exclaim, " Yes, God loves me !"

THE SCHOOL OF INFANCY :—" With the mother's milk the young child drinketh education." " No greater harm is done to Christendom, than by the neglect of children ; therefore, to advance the cause of Christ, we must begin with them."—*Martin Luther*.

RISE FROM OBSCURITY .—" There are many ways of doing our best : one man struggles against the adverse circumstances of his birth—poverty and early neglect ; another cultivates his mind, in spite of a meagre education, a want of books, or the necessity of devoting most of his time to earning his daily bread ; a cobbler has worked mathematical problems on strips of leather, while employed on his last ; a ploughman, treading the heavy furrow, and pressing the share into the bosom of the earth, has meditated on the heavenly bodies, and prepared himself to become a great astronomer ; other men have combated the temptations of their natural characters, or broken boldly away from evil associations, to prove in time the upright and zealous servants of God their maker."—*The Art of Doing our Best*.

Yes, the time soon comes, when the stern battle of life must be fought in earnest, and when a happy temper and a kind heart, in a husband or a wife, are as oil to our wounds, and marrow to our bones.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

CHRISTIANITY A RELIGION OF THE HEART.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON THE 2ND OF MARCH, 1862,

BY THE REV. ISAAC M. REEVES, A.M.,

IN THE CATHEDRAL OF CORK.

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."—EPIH. I. 18.

SELDOM do I wish to call attention to the least error or inaccuracy in our beautiful English version of the Scriptures. So much care was bestowed on it by the forty-seven learned divines, to whom the task was committed, in the reign of James I.; so free from faults is it upon the whole; so pure is the language, and exalted the style beyond what we find in any other composition, as if (and why should we doubt it?) the Holy Ghost was present with those men when they applied themselves to the sacred work; and so hallowed is it in our memories—its words being generally the first words to be imprinted in childhood upon the wax tablets of the mind, and being consecrated by the reading of them and the hearing of them again and again, that I am slow to disturb the feeling which naturally springs from this respect and reverence, that it is in every particular correct. But still, with the very highest regard for it, and not wishing for a moment that it should be again touched, I cannot place it on a par with the original, which we know was written by direct inspiration from God, and therefore, as I believe, to the minutest inflexion of every word free from error. A translation, be it ever so perfect, cannot always give, in consequence of the peculiarities of languages, the precise meaning and force of the first writer; and here and there, notwithstanding the utmost care, a word will creep in, which conveys a different sense from that originally intended; sometimes because a translator

The Mother's Magazine. April, 1862.

follows in a particular passage some recent manuscript.* So that there is an advantage in appealing to the old Greek and Hebrew, as it often helps to clear up difficulties, to decide points of dispute, to bring out more fully the strength and beauty of the argument, and thus make us more thoroughly acquainted with the mind of God. Now, in my text, which is (as you are aware) part of a beautiful prayer offered by the Apostle on behalf of the Ephesian Church, there is just one word which I would wish altered, and to which on the present day I would invite your attention. The Apostle prays thus, as I have read it:—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of your calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." The words ought to run thus, according to all the best and most ancient manuscripts:—"*The eyes of your heart being enlightened.*" The word is *Hapdiao*. And I think that by this a most important truth is taught, namely, that the heart, as it is the seat of the affections, is also that part of man's complex nature which is capable of understanding and rightly appreciating the more experimental truths of religion, "the deep things of God." "*The eyes of your heart being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.*" And, indeed, this is only what we may gather from other passages. The Apostle, for instance, says:—"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Now, what is to believe unto righteousness? Is it not to be so thoroughly persuaded of the truths of religion as that these truths will have a happy effect upon the life and character? Again, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." Surely the heart has something to say to spiritual discernment. But take another passage. In the 3rd chapter of this Epistle we have another beautiful prayer of the Apostle, in which the same truth is stated. He prays "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;" and what is the consequence of Christ dwelling in the heart by faith? "That ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge." Here the comprehension of the love of God is distinctly attributed to the heart.

I desire to call your attention to this subject because it seems to me that at the present day there is a growing disposition to exalt the intellect of man as the chief, if not the sole agent, in the work of religion in the soul—to suppose his mental powers fully capable of understanding all the truths of revelation, so far

* In the case of my text, our translators followed a comparatively recent *Erasmian* version.

as they are capable of being understood in this world, without any necessity for his heart being touched by the Divine influences of the Spirit to enable him to do so. And the consequence of such a rationalising system is, that people are plied with bare arguments, which have never converted one soul, instead of being directed to seek illumination from on high, and having their hearts kindled by something more than argument, the setting forth in all its excellence and glory the Gospel of the Grace of God. Now, in support of the Apostle's statement, that the *eyes of our heart* must be enlightened, I desire to lay before you the following considerations:—In the first place, it is natural to think that that part of our nature which most of all suffered at the time of the fall should be restored in some measure to its original perfection before man can become religious. Now, what part of our nature most suffered? Was it the intellect? We can scarcely think so, for a little after that event we find the descendants of the wicked Cain, who could not count one righteous man amongst them at the time of the deluge, were far more advanced in the arts and sciences than the descendants of Seth. They constructed tents; they invented musical instruments; they were artificers in brass and iron. It is evident that their intellectual power was at least as good as that of their kindred, who "began to call upon the name of the Lord," even of the Holy Enoch, who walked with God, and who was not, for God took him. There is no reason why they should not have remembered the traditions of Paradise, and the institutions of the Sabbath, and marriage, and sacrifice, quite as well as the children of Seth. Cain, their father, was as well acquainted with the being and attributes of God as Abel. *When he heard the voice of the Lord God* saying to him "Where is Abel, thy brother? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground," it was no want of knowledge of that Being who could strike him dead, it was no mental incapacity that made him reply in proud defiance, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" And similar proofs might be gathered from every succeeding age. We have no reason to think, then, that it was the intellect that most suffered; and we are left to conclude that it must have been the other part of our nature—the seat of the affections. But we need not infer this. We are told so plainly. "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?*" Even of those descendants of Cain to whom I have referred, the source of the evil is pointed out. "Every imagination of the thoughts of *their heart* was only evil continually." And the same fountain of sin still poured forth its defiling waters in the days of our blessed Lord. For "*out of the heart,*" he complains, "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." If, then, the heart be that part of our constitution which has been most completely

laid in ruins, it is natural, I say, to think that that is the part which has most need of regeneration before true religion can be embraced, and form, so to speak, the mainspring of the character.

Again: consider that on many other subjects beside those connected with religion the human intellect is not the only key to knowledge. Take the science of music. Can any one judge rightly of the harmony of sounds—let him be ever so well versed in the rules of criticism, and ever so well acquainted with the reasons why the great masters of the art introduced such and such passages into their compositions to produce a certain effect—if he has not what is called a musical ear? And the same in painting. Can he who has no taste for the art, by any amount of study of the laws of perspective, or of the other rules which guide the artist's hand in blending colours and laying on lights and shades, ever arrive at such a knowledge of its degrees of excellence as to enable him to act as judge in a picture gallery? Or, let me ask again, is youth fresh from college, with all the mental faculties in full exercise, able to cope with the difficulties of life immediately on first encountering them? Is it not a proverb that "experience teaches." Or, once more: can you, by cold reasoning, lay before a man prostrate under great affliction that there is no reason why he should give way to it—that if he correctly weighed all the arguments against it he would not feel it at all? Will not the sympathising eye, and the warm hand of friendship, and the healing influences of time (I am now purposely leaving out of the question the nobler consolations of religion), do more to alleviate his sorrow than such miserable comfort? And if we find thus that in the arts of life, and in the difficulties of life, and in the troubles of life, something more is needed than bare reason to teach, to guide, to comfort,—surely it is no unfair inference to draw that in religion the intellect is inadequate to give to man a thorough conviction of those truths which concern his everlasting well-being, and that he needs for this purpose a divinely-taught, divinely-influenced, and regenerate heart.

And, in point of fact, my brethren, we know that this is the case. It is absolutely certain that many, with refined and cultivated minds, live and die in sins which exclude from the kingdom of God. Some giants in intellect, have remained infidels. There is, besides, a difference between a rational assent to religious truths, and that assent which faith, which is wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, gives to them. Part of this difference is, that faith is always efficacious ("it worketh by love"), whereas rational assent has little or no influence upon the conduct. Thus, for instance, every one will assent to this truth, *all men are mortal*. It would be highly irrational to do otherwise. Yet

the greater part of mankind live as if the reverse of it were true. But they who have divine faith feel, as well as say, that they are pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth, and make constant preparation for leaving it. Faith, again, gives peace of conscience, access to God, and a sure evidence and hope of things not seen, whereas a calm dispassionate reasoner may be compelled to assent to the external arguments in favour of Christianity, and yet remain a total stranger to that communion with God, that spirit of adoption, that foretaste of glory, which is the privilege and portion of believers. And rational assent differs from spiritual conviction not only in its effects, but in its very nature. Why should it not? The latter is the work of the Holy Ghost. And there is as much difference between this enlightener and our own feeble power of reasoning, as between the glorious sun in the firmament and the light of the glowworm. "Rational views," says an eminent writer, "on the subject of sin, are partial and superficial; leave us in possession of a supposed power of our own, are pacified by some appearances of an outward change, and make us no further sensible of the necessity of a Saviour, than to make our own doings and duties (if I may so express myself), appear of full weight, which perhaps might be a little deficient when brought to the balances of the sanctuary. The views of faith, on the contrary, are far different. They lead us to a deep and awful consideration of the *root* of sin, our depravity, our total apostacy from God by nature, by which we are as incapable of doing good as a dead man is of performing the functions of life. They lead us to the right *rule and standard*, the holy and inflexible law of God, which reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart, requires perfect, universal, unremitting obedience, and denounces a curse upon every failure. They thus sweep away every hope and refuge we had before, and fix upon us a sense of guilt and condemnation, from which there is no relief till we can look to Jesus, as the wounded Israelites looked to the brazen serpent, which was not to give efficacy to medicines and plasters of their own, but to heal them completely of itself by looking at it. And this previous sense of extreme need, as well as the discovery of the marvellous adaptation of the remedy, makes Christ precious; enthrones Him in the heart, presents Him as the most delightful object to our meditations, as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, strength, our life, head, shepherd, husband;" and the joy thus obtained in drinking water out of the wells of salvation, as the prophet Isaiah beautifully expresses it, is what all the dry webs of human logic could never yield.

I ask, brethren, in corroboration of what I say, are there not many passages in Scripture, which seem to the irreligious mind extravagant language; ay! unintelligible jargon, simply because it cannot enter into them, and feel their meaning?

Is it not a fact, that there are passages which none of us can thoroughly comprehend, until some occasion arises when our whole heart is moved, by surrounding circumstances, enabling us to do so? The great Bishop Butler, who had during his life applied the powers of his exalted intellect and heaven-bent heart to vindicate and expound the sacred volume, yet perceived, upon his dying bed, a peculiar brilliancy in that lamp that God gave to guide us to the frontiers of eternity; and when a passage was read out to him by a friend, he begged that it might be read again, for, said he, "I never understood those words before." And so it is often. It is our own line that is not long enough to fathom the depths of Scripture, when we cannot reach the bottom. Not to draw my illustrations from a distance, look at the beautiful prayer of the apostle in my text, and the words that follow it. He prays that the eyes of their heart may be enlightened, that they may know a variety of sacred truths. Now, do you know those truths? Perhaps you know that you have been called as a Christian, and some hope given to you of better things. But do you know "*what is the hope of your calling?*" Perhaps you know that heaven is a glorious place, which Christ your Redeemer has gone to prepare. But do you know "*what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints?*" Perhaps you know, from the experience of your own evil nature, that whatever good desires you have, must have been wrought within you by the Spirit of God. But do you know "*what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe?*" Perhaps you know that there was some putting forth of Almighty energy in your case. But do you know that it was "*according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places.*" Do you know that the power which enabled you to believe, and to overcome your besetting sins, is the same which hath set Him "*far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.*" These are the subjects which the apostle prays the Ephesian people might be enlightened upon; and I am sure you will agree with me, in admitting that their truth and importance cannot be fully known until that enlightenment take place within the heart, that chamber of the inner man, where alone good desires and good thoughts, and heavenly aspirations can find a place.

Many other arguments I might adduce, but my time is brief. Only let me remind you what is the very essence of religion. Is it not the love of God? And where does love dwell? Is it not in the heart? How did it originate? "We

love Him, because He first loved us." Is not this process, which resembles the reflexion of the sun's beams, altogether the effect of heart acting upon heart; the heart of the God of love upon the rebellious hearts of His children? How does religion manifest itself? Is it not in love for the brethren? The apostle calls this principle "the more excellent way." He tells us, as you have just heard, in the beautiful epistle of this day's service, that it is the greatest of the graces; that it will outlive all the rest; that "though we could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and had it not, we are *like the sounding brass, or the tinkling cymbal*." O utterly incapable must the man be of paying any religious worship, or feeling any religious sentiment towards God, if he has no heart to manifest any love to man! We read in the newspapers of last week of a ferryman, who, when that ill-fated vessel, the Great Eastern, had, by a revolution of her screw, placed a whole boat's crew in jeopardy, scattered over the surging tide, which was then advancing with immense speed, moved not, heeded not, but deaf to the cries of the drowning men, and to the entreaties of those on shore and in the vessel, would have allowed them all to perish. Heartless wretch! One can scarce think the first rudiments of natural religion had found an entrance into his breast. He must have often had intercourse with human society, as backwards and forwards he ferried his passengers from shore to shore. Often, in the tempest, he must have beheld the majesty of God, and under the tranquil night, he must have seen the moon casting her silver light upon the ripples from his oar, and reflecting, as she sat a queen in the heavens, her image upon the liquid deep; but these things, which might have taught others, he heeded not. What the amount of his religion may be, it is not for me to speculate. God is the judge. I only speak of him to show that if we, as men, naturally feel strong indignation at such an act, what can be the relations between a want of heart and God?

I have left myself but little time for application; but surely, brethren, if Christianity is thus of the heart, if it is only truly learned and truly manifested when the affections are engaged, then it becomes the grand duty of every one to guard well this sacred fountain. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "My son, give me thy heart," says God; and though it is no unreasonable demand, it is no easy thing to do. The springs of love may be dried up, the affections may be diverted from their legitimate object. There are many things which will effect this. We may relax in prayer. We may cease to meditate upon God. We may grow careless of the means of grace. We may become absorbed in temporal pursuits. We may indulge in sin; and O, there is nothing so hardening! We may grow indolent in the discharge of religious and

other duties. This will beget formality, and formality will beget indifference; and thus the fire on the altar of the heart will become extinguished. All these things have to be guarded against. And we, the ministers of God, have the sacred duty imposed on us of watching and keeping alive, and resuscitating the flame within you. Blame us not if we sometimes speak to you in solemn earnest on these vital points; if, while members of our congregation are suddenly carried away, we use vehement speech and "cry aloud, lift up our voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgression," and ask you to see to it as the one thing needful, that your hearts are right in the sight of God. A thousand times better that, with the simplicity of a child, and in the sincerity of strong faith, you should be able to cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" and love Him with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind, and all your strength, than that you should be learned in all the lore of the ancients; and far more faithful we, if, instead of barren disquisitions, which the intellect might admire, we labour to extend a heart-felt religion on the earth, which is glorious in its effects of holiness, and acceptable to a God of love.

Sketches and Essays.

BE PATIENT WITH THE LITTLE ONES.

BE patient with the little ones. Let neither their slow understanding nor their occasional perverseness offend you, or provoke the sharp reproof. Remember the world is new to them, and they have no slight task to grasp, with their unripened intellects, the mass of facts and truths that crowd upon their attention. You are grown to maturity and strength through years of experience, and it ill becomes you to fret at the little child that fails to keep pace with your thought. Teach him patiently, as God teaches you, "line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little." Cheer him on in this conflict of mind; in after years his ripe, rich thought shall rise up and call you blessed.

Bide patiently the endless questionings of your children. Do not roughly crush the springing spirit of free inquiry with an impatient word or frown, nor attempt, on the contrary, a long and instructive reply to every slight and casual question. Seek rather to deepen their curiosity. Convert, if possible, the careless question into a profound and earnest inquiry; and aim rather to direct and aid, than to answer the inquiry. Let your reply send the little questioner forth, not so much proud of what he has learned, as anxious to know more. Happy you, if in giving your child the fragment of truth he asks for, you can whet his curiosity with a glimpse of the mountain of truth lying beyond; so wilt thou send forth a philosopher, and not a silly pedant into the world.

Bear patiently the childish humours of those little ones. They are but the untutored pleadings of the young spirit for care and cultivation. Irritated into strength, and hardened into habits, they will haunt the whole of life like fiends of despair, and make thy little ones curse the day they were born; but, corrected kindly and patiently, they become the elements of happiness and usefulness. Passions are but fires that may either scorch us with their uncontrolled fury, or may yield us a genial and needful warmth.

Bless your little ones with a patient care of their childhood, and they will consecrate the glory and grace of their manhood to your service. Sow in their hearts the seeds of perennial blessedness; its ripened fruit will afford you a perpetual joy.

ILL A WEEK AND DIED.

THE coffin-lid was silently removed by the dear boy's mother, and there he lay in the sleep of death. I stood and gazed upon the dead form. His light hair was carefully combed and laid upon his brow, his little hand rested upon his side, and he seemed asleep. But he was dead. His hard, cold forehead felt like death. But so unlike death was it all, that I could only exclaim, "What a beautiful sight!"

He had not lived quite five years, but his life and death were marked by the simplest faith in Jesus.

His mother had early taught him the value of prayer. The first particular instance of his love of prayer occurred when he was just three years old. It was a very deep snow. It was getting dark, and his father had not come from a journey. Seeing his mother's anxiety, he looked earnestly at her, and asked the cause. "The snow is still falling, and your father is not yet home." He immediately said, "I will go and pray to Jesus, dear mother, and he will send him home." He prayed; then, waiting for a few minutes, he went again, and knelt down by his father's chair, and repeated the same words, "Dear Jesus, do send my father home out of the snow." A short time after his father came home. "There, mother," he said, "I knew Jesus would send dear father home, because I asked him." In every little trouble he would go by himself and pray, and that with the full belief that his prayer would be answered.

He was naturally passionate, and needed correction and sometimes chastisement. "After I had punished him," said his mother, "I felt sorry, for he was a very dear child. He would ask me to kiss and forgive him, while the tears were on his cheeks. Sometimes I have said to him, 'It grieves me to whip you, my dear child.' To this he would say, 'Jesus wishes you to whip me when I am naughty.' And then he would kneel down and say, 'Dear Jesus, do forgive me, and do make me a better boy.' Sometimes he would speak crossly to his sister when they were playing together, and she would leave him. After a time he would come and kiss her, and say, 'Dear Margy do

come and play again. I know you will; for I have asked Jesus to forgive me, and to have you come.' This he did the last day he was out to play.'

A sermon on the text, "They went and told Jesus," confirmed him much in the practice of going and telling Jesus all his little troubles.

He died of some affection in the throat. In his illness might be seen the same beautiful and simple prayerfulness. In his sufferings he prayed, "Dear Jesus, do give me one quarter of an hour's ease." And when it came, he said, "Now thank Jesus for it, dear father, for I have not breath enough." Seeing his mother crying in the early part of his illness, he said, "Mother, don't cry; I am not afraid to die. I am going to be with Jesus in heaven, and then I will pray for you and father." She asked him whether he would rather live or die, "Oh, die, and go to heaven; for that would be all heavenly." His sister said, "Why, Richard dear, you certainly would not like to die and leave us all to cry for you." "Oh," said he, "I should not wish you to cry; for I shall be a little angel, and will pray for you all to come."

Dear little Richard's thinking that he should be a "little angel," and would "pray for his father and mother in heaven," of course was not right; for it is not what the Scripture teaches us. But this, his childish mistake even, still shows us how strong his faith was in the power of Jesus to hear prayer.

He was born December 21st, 1853, and died October 31st, 1859, after only a week's illness.

The lessons to be learned from this dear child's history are, to be simple in faith in the Lord Jesus, and to be earnest in prayer. We must believe in the power and love of Jesus, and make it our habit to go and tell him of all our wants and all our troubles.

THE SERVICE OF PATIENCE.

OLD Betty was a match-seller. She was brought in her old age to believe in Jesus as her Saviour, and from that time thought she never could do enough for him who had washed her from her sins in his own blood. Ever ready to speak of her master to all she met, and of unwearied kindness, she was one "who went about doing good," "always abounding in the work of the Lord." But in the midst of her labours, she caught cold, with rheumatism, and was confined to her bed for days and weeks.

One day a minister called on her. He was surprised to see his old, active friend and neighbour so happy in bed, and said, "I little expected to find you so patient in bed, when you have always led such an active life. It must be a trial to lie there so long."

"Not at all, sir, not at all, sir," said Betty; "when I was well I used to hear the Lord say to me daily, Betty, go here; Betty, go there; Betty, do this, Betty, do that; and I did it as well as I could. Now I hear him say daily, Betty, lie still, and cough."

The poor woman had not only "learned in whatsoever state she was, therewith to be content"—her homely words showed that she understood the service of patience. As Milton said, consoling himself on his blindness:—

"God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

MY MOTHER.

SHE led me first to God,
Her words and prayers were my young
spirit's dew;
For when she used to leave
The fireside, every eve,
I knew it was for prayer that she withdrew.

That dew that bless'd my youth,
Her holy love, her truth,
Her spirit of devotion and her tears,
That she could not suppress,
Hath never ceased to bless
My soul,—nor will it through eternal years.

How often has the thought
Of my mourn'd Mother, brought
Peace to my troubled spirit, and new power,
The tempter to repel!
Mother! thou knowest well
That thou hast bless'd me since thy mortal hour.

A TALK WITH THE LITTLE ONES ABOUT JESUS.

UNDER the title of "Emblems," the *Evangelical Magazine* is publishing a series of articles for the children of Christian households. We copy the following from the number for April, in the hope that it will be carefully read by a great many of the "Little Ones," who, we are glad to know, look with interest, to our Magazine:—

'What shall be our emblem to-day, Miss Minton?' 'The animal by whose name Christ is most often called; who can tell me what that name is?' 'Oh, I know,' said Bertie, 'the Lamb, the Lamb!' 'And where is he most frequently called by that name?' 'In Revelation,' said Mary Jane; 'and do you know I learnt that, Miss Minton, when I was such a little girl, before I could quite read. I went to stay with cousin Nellie once, when Mama was ill. You know Nellie is our youngest cousin in London. On Sunday afternoon, when all the elder ones were reading with aunt, she showed us the word Lamb near the end of the large Bible, and when it came to our turn, instead of reading, we showed auntie Lamb. We tried to find a fresh one every time, and we found so many.'

'Can you tell me who first called Christ a Lamb?' 'I don't know, but is it that text (don't you remember, Mary Jane?) that dear grandpapa said to us when he took us to see the sheep clipped?' 'What, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth?"' 'Yes, that is it; and don't you remember we saw both parts of the text, when we were at grandpapa's? One week the sheep were clipped, and another week the shepherd was taking the finest lamb of all to be killed, and it made no noise.'

'Who said these words?' 'I don't know exactly, Miss Minton. I am not quite sure where to find them, only I know they are not in Revelation, for grandmama looked near the middle of her Bible.'

'Turn to Isaiah liii. 7.' 'Oh, yes, here it is; but I thought all the Old Testament was written before Christ came, and it says here, "He is brought." 'You are right; the last book of the Old Testament was written about four hundred years before the birth of our Saviour; this book of Isaiah about seven hundred. Isaiah was a prophet; you know what that is?' 'Yes, one who tells about

things before they happen ; but how can men know ?' 'Who does know ?' 'Only God, so God must tell them.'

'God used sometimes to speak to the prophets, and sometimes in a kind of dream he showed them what was going to happen. I think Isaiah had been seeing one of these visions or dreams just before he wrote this chapter ; and you have read the beautiful story of the crucifixion so often, you can remember, without our turning to it now, how truly all that Isaiah had written came to pass. Not one word of complaint or anger from the gentle Jesus—the Lamb of God—even when the soldiers were so rude as to spit upon him, a thing that would make any man angry, especially if he knew he need not be afraid. And Jesus, remember, could, with one wish, have laid all these cruel men dead at his feet ; he knew that well enough : he even said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"' 'But why, Miss Minton, should God, so good, so kind, let his own son suffer so much ? I often wonder and wonder, and I cannot understand it.'

'Ah, it is wonderful indeed, but I will try and help you to see something of the reason why. Read the fifth verse of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. A little boy, who was asked what that verse meant, replied, "Teacher, is it not this — Christ took the punishment, and we have the peace?"'

'I once heard a good missionary tell a beautiful story, which explains this text better than any words of mine can do.

'A Hindoo native teacher wanted to tell his hearers what he meant by saying Christ died in their stead—was their substitute ; so he said, "There was a great king who ruled over much land and many people. All rich and glorious things were to be found in his country ; the king himself lived in a gorgeous palace, and had many servants to wait on him, and children to love him, but his heart was not content, and why ? He was continually hearing that his laws were disobeyed, his wishes disregarded, his will made light of by his people. So he called together his nobles and his wise men, and said, 'O ye, my friends and counsellors, I have no pleasure in these my riches, in this my princely palace, for my laws are not kept, my wishes are not regarded.'

"Then said the nobles and wise men, O great king, live for ever ! thy laws are not obeyed, but it is because the people do not

know them. Cause thy decrees to be written, and let messengers be sent on camels and on elephants, throughout the provinces of this thy mighty empire, and let them everywhere loudly proclaim thy laws, and make known thy will. The king replied, 'It is good that ye have said, it shall be done.' Messengers were at once despatched to every corner of that vast empire, and all heard the will of the great king; but still his subjects did not obey him, and he was troubled more and more. Again he called together his mighty men, and said, 'I have done as ye counselled; my laws have been made known through the length and breadth of the land, but still the people disobey.'

'The wise men answered, 'O great king, if the people will not obey they must be punished. Let it be proclaimed through all thy dominions, that whoever, young or old, high or low, shall not yield obedience to thy decrees, shall, on his bared back, receive one thousand lashes.' Said the king, 'The punishment is severe, but it shall be according to your words.' Then he sent forth messengers on camels and on elephants, proclaiming everywhere the fearful punishment that should fall on those who should disobey his commands.

'Not many days after, an old man was brought before him, and accused of having broken the law. The witnesses were heard, and he was found guilty. The king was in great grief, he knew not what to do; but said his nobles and his wise men, 'O king, thou must not recall thy words; if this man be not punished, thy laws will never be obeyed, there will never be peace or order.' Then slowly and solemnly the king ordered the punishment to be inflicted. Upon this, a young man rushed forward, embracing the feet of his sovereign, said, 'O great king, thy laws are good—this man has broken them—his punishment is just, but he cannot bear it—he is old; before he has received fifty lashes, he will lie quivering and breathless at thy feet. I am young and strong, let me take the punishment in his stead, so shall thy laws be honoured, and the life of the old man be saved.'

'The king turned to his nobles, and said, 'This is new, but it seems right; shall it be so?' They assented, and the young man did not wait to be bound, but, baring his back to the executioners, meekly received the fearful punishment. He neither struggled nor groaned, though his wounds were terrible, and his blood covered the ground; but when the last stroke had fallen, with a mild majesty

he rose, and, turning to the old man, said, 'You may go—you are free—I have borne the punishment instead.' "Friends, brothers," said the Hindoo preacher, "This is what Jesus the Saviour has done for you."'

'Now I see,' said the children, 'God must keep his word, and so Jesus must die. Was not he a wise Hindoo to tell such a beautiful story?' 'He was, indeed, and it is a joy to think that many of these men who wasted their fine thoughts and glowing words, on idle dreams, and hideous idols, are now spending their time and talents in teaching their countrymen of the true God and salvation by Jesus. But suppose the old man had gone away, without one word of thanks, to break the laws again?' 'Oh, that would have been wicked and ungrateful!' 'Ah, my children, it is what we do day by day to him who gave his life that we might live.'

'Who was it that called Jesus a Lamb when he was on earth?' 'I don't remember.' 'Turn to John i. 29. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." What John is this who speaks?' 'John the Baptist. And here it is again in verse the thirty-sixth, "Behold the Lamb of God!"' 'Yes, and this punishment, you see, was not for one, but for you, for me, for the whole world.'

"Now turn to Revelation v. 6, 'And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living ones, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes.'"

"How curious it must look, 'seven horns and seven eyes;' do you think Jesus really looks like that in heaven?" "Oh no, my love, these words are emblems still. We know that Jesus went up into heaven in the body that rose from the dead, and in that body, all bright and glorious, we shall one day see him; but he is called a lamb because he is gentle and loving still, as he was on earth, Seven the Jews called a perfect number, because in seven days God perfected or completed the earth and all that is therein. Having seven horns means that Jesus is perfect in power; there is nothing that he cannot do; and seven eyes perfect in knowledge; there is nothing that he does not know: in heaven, not one overlooked, not even the baby Alice; and on earth, each little child is known to him; all its difficulties, all its desires, even Bertie's trying to be patient, and Mary Jane's effort to be diligent."

"But it says, 'As a Lamb that had been slain.'" "It means that in heaven, before all the holy angels, he is not ashamed to say, 'I died for men, and they all talk about it there,'"

"There your dear little baby sister is learning about Jesus, the same as we do. I like to think of that. I wonder if she can understand it yet." "I don't know; she seemed to understand so much on earth, she will learn fast in heaven, I am sure: but we can't tell much about it, only I know the smile of Jesus makes her glad, and she can understand his words of love,

'But we must not talk more now, my children; it is time for other lessons.'

"To work, to work, and let us see
How industrious we can be."

THE PLUCKED FLOWER.

A GENTLEMAN'S gardener had a darling child, in whom his affections seemed to be centered. The Lord laid his hands upon the babe—it sickened and died. The father was disconsolate, and murmured at the dealings of Providence.

The gardener had in one of his flower-beds a favourite rose. It was the fairest flower he had ever seen on the tree, and he daily marked its growing beauty, intending when full blown, to send it to his master's mansion. One morning it was gone—some one had plucked it. Mortified at what he thought was the improper conduct of one of the servants, he endeavoured to find out the culprit. He was, however, much surprised to find that his master, on walking through the garden, had been attracted by the beauty of the rose, and, plucking it, had carried it to one of the beautiful rooms in the Hall. The gardener's anger was changed into pleasure. He felt reconciled when he heard that his master thought the flower worthy of such special notice.

"Ah, Richard," said the gentleman, "you can gladly give up the rose, because I thought it worthy of a place in my house. And will you repine because your Heavenly Father has thought wise to remove your child from a world of sin, to be with himself in heaven?"

THE FAMILY ALTAR.

Come to the place of prayer !
 Parents and children, come and kneel before
 Your God, and with united hearts adore
 Him whose alone your life and being are.

Come to the place of prayer !
 Ye band of loving hearts, oh, come and raise,
 With one consent, the grateful song of praise,
 To him who blessed you with a lot so fair.

Come in the morning hour—
 Who hath restored you from the dream of night ?
 Whose hand has poured around you cheering light ?
 Come and adore that kind and heavenly power.

Come at the close of day,
 Ere wearied nature sinks in gentle rest,
 Come, and let all your sins be here confessed ;
 Come, and for his protecting mercy pray.

Has sorrow's withering blight
 Your dearest hopes in desolation laid,
 And the once cheering home in gloom arrayed ?
 Yet pray, for he can turn the gloom to light.

Has sickness entered in
 Your peaceful dwelling ? Let the prayer ascend,
 On wings of faith, to that all gracious Friend,
 Who came to heal the bitter pains of sin.

Come to the place of prayer !
 At morn, at night, in gladness, or in grief,
 Surround the throne of grace ; there seek relief,
 And pay your free and grateful homage there.

So, in the world above,
 Parents and children all may meet at last,
 When this their weary pilgrimage is past,
 And mingle there the joyful notes of love.

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

Who can measure the influence of a mother on the young and immortal minds of her children ! Her look, her actions, her smiles, or her frowns on her children, stamp impressions on their minds which will last for ever. She gives a moulding influence to their character, their course of life, their temporal and eternal well-being. They rise to the glories and happiness of heaven, or sink to the woes and ruin of a lost eternity, much according as the mother trains them up for God, or permits their minds to grow up in selfishness and sin. The mother sits at the threshold of their existence, and directs their first tottering footsteps. Her duties lie at the fountains of human society, and from these young springs of life flow out in all after existence streams of bitter water or sweet, purified or poisonous, according as the mother directs the minds of her children to the only Saviour, and prays with and for them.

The nursery is the mother's moral garden, in which she nourishes the tender plants by faith and prayer, and trains them up to be transplanted at mature growth to the paradise and garden of God. The mother's influence is often much greater than the father's. Her post is more responsible, as she engraves deeper and more indelible lines on the minds of children. She stands at the head of the race. By the gentle touch of her finger she is starting those balls at the top of the mountain, which once set in motion, proceed on their course with increasing force and velocity to the end. Or, to use a happier figure, they are kindling those sparks of elemental fire, which have their origin, under a Divine constitution, in the companionship of both sexes, and which, according to the direction here given at their start, rise to shine as stars in the firmament of heaven, or sink in the blackness of darkness for ever. All the most important springs of society are held and controlled by the feeble hand of woman, every chord vibrates to her touch, as with magic sensibility, and every harmony in the social system waits on her impulses. How pure and tender, then, should be a mother's heart ! How careful of her look, her smiles, her conduct, her every action, which imprints such indelible lines, and exerts such imperishable influence on the young minds of her children ! How humble, how prayerful, how near to God ought a mother to live, that the light of his countenance, which beams on her heart, may reflect its lineaments

Divine on the immortal minds of those which God has entrusted to her care to train up for him!

FAMILY FAILINGS.

THE habit of viewing everything in a ridiculous light is one of the family failings that I would warn against. It too often leads to an unamiable desire to detect and hold up to ridicule the faults of others, and it almost always destroys the finer feelings of admiration for what is beautiful, and the tender and more loveable of putting the best construction upon the actions of others, etc. A critical, censorious, fault-finding person is a most unamiable being; and let us not conceal the true odiousness of such propensities in ourselves, under a guise of the sense of the ludicrous.

In many families, however, where both love and good temper prevail, there is what may be called an irksome, rather than a sinful, mode of carping and contradicting one another. No harm is meant, and no offence is taken; but what is more irksome than to hear two sisters, for instance, continually setting each other right upon trifling points, and differing from each other in opinion for no apparent reason, but from a habit of contradiction? And such a habit does it become, that one may sometimes see persons who have acquired it contradict their own statements just made, the moment any one advances the same opinion. It is generally on such trifles that this bad habit shows itself, so that it may seem needless to advert to it; but it is a family fault, and should be watched against, for it is an annoyance, though but a petty one, never to be able to open your lips without being harrassed by such contradictions as, "Oh, no, that happened on Tuesday, not Wednesday;" or, if you remark that the clouds look threatening, to be asked with a tone of surprise, "Do you think it looks like rain? I am sure there is no appearance of such a thing." Narrate an incident, every small item is corrected; hazard an opinion, it is wondered at or contradicted; assert a fact, it is doubted and questioned; till you at length keep silence in despair.

EDUCATING DAUGHTERS.

MOTHERS, have you daughters—sweet, lovely, amiable? How do you educate them? on what principles? worldly, time-serving? Are you aiming to give them merely what is termed a genteel education? Or, are you taking Bible ground, educating them for God?

Education is either a blessing or a curse, and if a curse, oh, what a curse! The following sketch from "The Friend of Virtue" conveys our meaning definitely :—

"Take a glance at female society as it exists among the educated, popularly so called. How many delicate constitutions! How many slender, sickly forms! How very, very many are annually falling into premature graves! How many youngladies will you see who know no more about good housewifery than their little sisters of eight summers! Aye, how many who are really proud, and even boast of such stupid ignorance! And their excuse is, they are rich, and need not work. But who will instruct their household for them? How many, in your investigation, will you see who spend most of their time at the toilet or wardrobe, adorning their pale faces and sickly forms with a thousand useless and senseless ornaments! How many who dwell chiefly in splendid parlours, till they become mere house-plants, and seldom breathe the pure air of heaven, unless when gallanting in the streets with 'upper tens!'

"How many of these persons, many of whom possess the finest talents in the world will you find at the prayer-meetings? How many at the theatre, museum, or vulgar circus? How many out of a thousand of them could or would kneel at the bed-side of a dying penitent, and in audible voice intelligently address the throne of grace in behalf of the returning prodigal? How many could you find that would leave their excessive indulgences in mirth and folly and seek out the abode of the poor, the low, the erring, and, by the persuasive and soothing charms of woman's loving heart, restore them to the paths of rectitude and virtue? Do you say they are hard to find? It need not be so, for woman has an ability to do such deeds of virtue that man never had. All that is necessary is, to have her rightly educated, and properly devoted to God and the redemption of the race.

"Every young lady, in attempting to acquire a thorough education, should remember that she is not a butterfly, designed to glitter in the sun, and spend her time, talents, and fortune in making a show to the world, but that the chief end of her being is to serve God; first by securing the salvation of her own soul, and then by alleviating the distress and correcting the errors of mankind to the fullest extent of her power. An education which makes this impracticable is, in that proportion, a curse."

A TRUE SKETCH.

WHEN travelling in a northern county, some years ago, I met with a striking proof of the sustaining power of true religion—a poor woman who had been confined to her bed for a long period, in what would have been thought by many a wretched cottage, without any of the little adornments we so often meet with in the dwellings of the English poor. Not a geranium or rosebud were there; the only visible comforts were some small calico bags, hanging from the whitewashed walls, filled with letters and little books, the gifts of sympathising friends; and dear they were to poor Nanny. When we first became acquainted, her husband was living, afflicted with that fatal malady the dropsy. The grave soon closed over him. Poor Nanny, though alone, bereft of earthly companionship, and subject to constant pain and sickness, and struggling with poverty, was one of the happiest creatures I ever saw; rejoicing in the finished work of her Saviour, with a sure and certain hope, through His blood and righteousness, of finally entering into His heavenly kingdom, to go out no more for ever.

“The love of Christ within her heart
Lit up the languid eye;
Like Paul, with her 'twas Christ to live;
Like him, 'twas gain to die.”

Oh, what a change from that couch of mortal suffering to be clothed with immortality, and for ever with the Lord! A brief period has passed away since I received a letter from a Christian friend, informing me that the summons had arrived, and that dear Nanny had exchanged the sorrows of earth for the joys of heaven. she was with her Lord.—*Old Jonathan.*

FRAGMENT BASKET.

A HINT TO PARENTS:—You remember the coachman who said to the gentleman on the box, “Do you see that off leader there, sir?” “Yes—what of him?” “He always shies, sir, when he comes to that 'ere gate. I must give him something to think on.” No sooner said, then up went the whirling thong, and came down full of its sting on the skittish leader's haunches. He “had something else to

think on," no time for panic or affected panic, and flew past the gate like lightning. If we can but give youth, in time, "something else to think on," we may keep out of their minds, by pre-occupation, more evil than we can ever directly expel. One of the essential properties of matter may be said to be also one of the essential properties of mind—impenetrability; it is as impossible that two thoughts can co-exist in the same mind at the same time, as that two particles of matter can occupy the same space.—*Correspondence of R. E. H. Greyson.*

EFFECTS OF EARLY TEACHING ON A ROBBER:—During the absence of Mr. James Montgomery at public worship, one Lord's day, some robbers entered his house at Sheffield, and stole, among other articles, a silver inkstand, which had been presented to him by the ladies of that town. The loss, however, was but for a time—"And," remarked Mr. Montgomery, "proved the occasion of the greatest compliment I ever had paid me. A few days after my loss, a box came directed to me—I opened it, and lo! there was, uninjured, the missing inkstand! and a note, in which the writer expressed his regret that he had entered my house and taken it. The thief said, his mother had taught him some of my verses when he was a boy, and on seeing my name on the inkstand he first became aware whose house he had robbed, and was so stung with remorse that he could not rest until he had restored my property, hoping God would forgive him."

HANNAH MORE'S VIEW OF INGRATITUDE:—At a dinner party at Bath, the late Mr. Jay, by whom the anecdote was communicated, was lamenting the ingratitude which Hannah More had recently met with from a person whom he had recommended to her beneficence; upon which he received a look from her which silenced him. After dinner, drawing him into a corner of the room, she said: "You know we must never speak of such things as these before people, for they are always too backward to do good, and they are sure to dwell on such facts to justify their illiberality." She finally added, "It is well for us sometimes to meet with such instances of ingratitude, to show us our motives; for if they have been right, we shall not repent what they have done, though we lament the depravity of a fellow-creature. In these instances, also, as in a glass, we may see little emblems of ourselves; for what, after all, is the ingratitude of

any one towards us, compared with our ingratitude toward our Infinite Benefactor?"

"A WHOLE GLASS."—Intervals of religious consolation relieved the general despondency of Cowper in his latter years. Among these occurred one which was brought about in a very interesting manner. He awoke one morning in deep dejection, exclaiming, "I shall perish." Suddenly there appeared to him the vision of a wine-glass, and an unknown voice was heard saying, "A whole glass." The story of Mrs. Honeywood was thus suggested to him. This estimable Christian lady became a victim of religious despondency, and finally gave herself up as abandoned by God. In conversation with a minister, she dashed a wine-glass, which she happened to be holding in her hand, upon the floor, exclaiming, "I am as surely damned as this glass is broken." Strange to say, the glass was taken up whole. She ultimately regained her religious enjoyment, which never after left her. Cases where self-abandonment is mistaken for abandonment by God are not unusual; they come under the observation of every active Christian. To one in this frame of mind, incidents like the above are always cheering.

A MOTHER'S PRAYERS:—Forty years ago, on the mountains of western Massachusetts, a mother, with eight children, five of them under the age of fourteen, was left to trust in the widow's God and Father of the fatherless. She called them around her regularly, and led them in family worship; and often at the dead of night her low voice was heard calling on her heavenly Father to have mercy upon them. Before the youngest had reached the age of twenty-one, all except one son had hope in Christ. That son early in life left the family to learn a trade; but on becoming of age, he found himself amid the outpouring of the Spirit; the sound of his mother's voice at midnight, when he slept in the chamber with her, reached his heart. He too found peace in Christ, and has long been a pillar in the church, and superintendent of the Sabbath-school in a new settlement. The mother still lives in peace and quiet, waiting till her change come; her children are supposed to be all yet living, handing down her influence to the third generation, and willing to aid their mother; but she has a competence of this world's goods. Such is the history of a praying widow and her children for forty years.

Sketches and Essays.

THE FIRST-BORN.

THERE is a birth-note of joy in the household. The new father and mother—their friends smile, partly in mirth and partly from sympathy, at their overflowing gladness. A child is born; and the first child born in a family—it is wonderful! The life of the first child is wonderful! All the way through it is a wonderful child. Its eyes are wonderful; its nose is wonderful; its mouth is wonderful! it grows more and more wonderful up to the first tooth, which is the most wonderful of all! Its hands are wonderful; and its feet are past all admiration! Its first step is wonderful. And its first word—the nurse, the servants, and all the neighbours, must know it; and it is chronicled and remembered. There is a kind of legend of the early child; of its wonderful doings and not doings; of its wonderful traits and developments. Yes, it is wonderful. But that is not all.

If God should open the gate of heaven, and show you a procession of radiant angels walking hither and thither, you would be filled with a kind of wondering amazement that you had been permitted to see such a celestial vision; but I tell you that to look on angels whose race is accomplished, and who stand in Zion and before God, is not to be compared for wonder, with looking upon a child in the cradle, of which God says to you, "There are undeveloped in that child endless ages of experience; a character whose duration shall have no bounds; a life that shall go on for ever and for ever."

Think not that God has put into your cradle an animated doll. Think not that God has put a child there to make you proud and happy because you are on a par with your neighbours that have got children, and are at last in full manhood, walking in the procession of parents. It is eternal life that has begun there. It is the commencement of a Divine administration over an accountable soul. It is the lending by God to you of one of his most precious things—an immortal nature. And you that, as parents, have children committed to your hands to be educated for heaven, have a charge that

is ten thousand times more important than any earthly kingdom. Your child is given to you to be brought up in the manner best calculated to qualify it for the life to come. Your supremacy over it is absolute. It is a reign that shall never be discrowned. The laws that you enact, and the citizenship that you develop, are to be permanent. They will continue for ever and for ever.

And with such a charge it is worth your while to stay at home. Sometimes mothers think it is hard to be shut up at home with the care of little children. But she that takes care of little children takes care of great eternities. She that takes care of a little child takes care of an empire that knows no bounds and no dimensions.

It was a great thing to have been a Milton, and to have written many of his sonnets, that are like birds without nests, singing in the air, and never tiring. It is a great thing to have written his "Paradise Lost," and various other poems of his. But the mother that is bringing up a child is doing a work that is transcendently greater than the writing of any of Milton's pieces. The parent that stays at home and takes care of children is doing a work as boundless as God's heart.

ECHOES OF A MOTHER'S VOICE.

"THERE was once," says Dr. P. H. Fowler, "an obscure and pious woman living in the south of England. History is silent respecting her ancestry, her place of birth, and her education. She had an only son whom she made it her great business to train in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In the seventh year of his age, his mother died, and a few years later the lad went to sea, and engaged at length as a sailor in the African slave trade. He was soon an adept in vice, and though among the youngest of the crew, he was the most proficient in guilt. But his mother's instructions sent their echoes to him, and though at first he sought to deafen himself to them, they grew louder and louder, until listening to them at last, he became a fervent Christian, a successful preacher, the author of books which the Church will never let die, and a writer of hymns the use of which is co-extensive with our tongue.

"This wayward son, whom his mother, though dead, addressed and reclaimed, was the means of the conversion of Claudius Buchanan, so distinguished for his labors in the East Indies; and the 'Star in the East,' a book published by Dr. Buchanan, first called the attention of our Judson to the missionary work, and sent him an apostle to Burmah.

“The sailor turned preacher, was also the means of delivering the Rev. Thomas Scott from the mazes of ruinous error, and introducing him to the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Mr. Scott prepared the Commentary known by his name, and which still continues its mission of converting and sanctifying power.

“The influence of this same minister and author, in connection with that of Doddridge, was principally instrumental in making Wilberforce the Christian he was. To Wilberforce’s ‘Practical View of Christianity,’ the conversion of Leigh Richmond may be ascribed, and Leigh Richmond wrote ‘The Dairyman’s Daughter,’ and other tracts, which have contributed to the salvation of thousands of souls.

“Such are some of the results of that voice from the dead which spoke to John Newton ; and what a small portion of the whole sum has yet been revealed?”

MOTHERS IN ISRAEL—MRS. CECIL.

THE Rev. Richard Cecil, who was so long “a burning and a shining light” in St. John’s Episcopal Chapel, Bedford Row, London, has related how much he owed to the Christian example and counsel of his mother. She was the only child of Mr. Grosvenor, a merchant in London, and was early decided for Christ. Richard was born after she was fifty years of age ; but she was as eager that he should inherit the promise as ever Sarah was for her Isaac. Many prayers did she record in the book of God’s remembrance on his behalf ; and, as soon as he was capable of receiving instruction and impressions, she sought opportunity to direct his mind to the Saviour. He records his feelings after having received from her a present of Janeway’s “Token for Children,” when he was six years old. “I was,” he says, “much affected by this book, and recollect that I wept, and got into a corner, where I prayed that I also might have ‘an interest in Christ,’ like one of the children there mentioned, though I did not then know what the expression meant.”

These and other influences were the seeds which yielded fruit in after days, though his character and conduct greatly tried the faith and patience of his mother. As he grew up in years, he appeared to cast off his religious character, and affected to be sceptical of the evidence of the Word of God. He could not, however, divest himself of the impression produced by what he had seen exemplified at home. To

this he afterwards referred in the following words:—"Where parental influence does not convert, it hampers. It hangs on the wheels of evil. I had a pious mother, who dropped things in my way; I could never rid myself of them. I liked to be an infidel when in company rather than when alone. I was wretched when by myself. I could not divest myself of my better principles. I went with one of my companions to see 'The Mirror.' The ridicule on regeneration was high sport to him; to me, it was none; it could not move my features. He knew no difference between regeneration and transubstantiation. I did; I knew there was such a thing. I was afraid and ashamed to laugh at it. Parental influence thus cleaves to a man; it harasses him; it throws itself continually in his way. My mother would talk to me, and weep as she talked. I flung out of the house with an oath; but wept, too, when I got into the street."

Like the mother of Augustine, Mrs. Cecil wept and prayed for her son who seemed to be disappointing all her anxious hopes and earnest endeavours. And to her a covenant God proved that a child of many tears and prayers could not perish. The conscience of the transgressor was not at rest. Thought would often go back to the unanswerable evidence of a mother's holy life, and judgment acquiesced in the truth. As he lay one night on his bed, his soul was occupied with this image of true piety which his mother had set before his opening youth every day, and how it shone on the sorrow she was then passing through. "I see," he said, "two unquestionable facts; my mother is greatly afflicted in circumstances, body and mind; and yet I see that she cheerfully bears up under all, by the support she derives from constantly retiring to her closet and her Bible; secondly, that she has a secret spring of comfort of which I know nothing; while I, who give an unbounded loose to my appetites, and seek pleasure by every means, seldom or never find it. If, however, there is any such secret in religion, why may I not attain it as well as my mother? I will immediately seek it of God."

The resolution was immediately acted upon, and he sought God in prayer; but his knowledge, so accurately taught by a mother's spiritual wisdom, convinced him that faith in Christ was the source of his mother's comfort, and of her hope in prayer. Christ he had refused and blasphemed. To find Christ was his desire, and he sought the counsel of his mother in the pangs of his second birth. He listened to her words with earnestness, and she had the joy of seeing

the change which evidenced faith in Christ and regeneration by the Spirit. Peace possessed his soul, and grace adorned his character. What happiness must this have conferred on his believing mother! How would she grudge the severity of the trial, for the experience of the triumph of faith in the prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. It is this satisfaction which proves the highest gladness to a mother—not merely that a man is born into the world, but born into the kingdom of God. Christian mothers! let this be your supreme desire for the children whom God has given you. Mrs. Cecil did not doubt the promise, “I will be thy God and the God of thy seed,” and, while realising the one in all its blessedness, sought to possess the other. The faithful Promiser met all her desires, and enabled her to set to her seal that God was true.

Mr. Cecil, after this radical change had passed upon him, desired to devote himself to the Christian ministry. This was his father's wish. He therefore entered Queen's College, Oxford, in 1773, and after passing through the usual course of study, was ordained in 1776. His ministry was full of zeal and usefulness, and, while profitable to many souls, was the special joy of his mother during the brief period she lived.

Mrs. Cecil died full of faith and hope in the year 1777, and her husband in a year and six months afterwards. Their son could thus acknowledge his obligations to them in one of his addresses to parents:—“The spirit and tone of your house will have great influence on your children. If it is what it ought to be, it will often fasten conviction on their minds, however wicked they may become. I have felt the truth of this in my own case: I said, ‘My father is right, and I am wrong! Oh, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!’ The bye conversations of a family are, in this view, of unspeakable importance. On the whole, arguments addressed to the heart press more forcibly than those addressed to the head. When I was a child, and a very wicked one too, one of Dr. Watt's hymns sent me to weep in a corner. I felt the influence of faith in suffering Christians. The character of young Samuel came home to me, when nothing else had any hold on my mind.”

Who can estimate the value of instruction in the Holy Scriptures when that is accompanied by the evidence of piety in parents? This was what Mrs. Cecil sought to combine, and the effect was such as has been briefly described. Parents greatly injure the influence of

their teaching by personal or domestic inconsistencies, Children are quick to observe, and acquire by far the largest portion of their early instruction, and that especially which moulds their own being, from what they see in their parents.

There is much to encourage maternal training of children in the way of the Lord. Examples from the earliest period are strewn over the pages of the Bible, from the books of Moses to the writings of St. John the Divine. And Christian ages have added numerous instances. Indeed, it seems to be the grand idea of the family that there might be a "Godly seed." Many an eminent man of God has not blushed to say, "I am Thy servant and the son of Thine hand-maid," and to add—

"And if I e'er in heaven appear,
A mother's holy prayer,
A mother's hand and gentle tear,
That pointed to a Saviour dear,
Have led the wanderer there."

British Herald.

UNGODLY CHILDREN.

DAVID had many trials in his children. It has often been the lot of good men to have great troubles from their sons and daughters. True, we know some households that are the very image of peace and happiness; where the father and mother bend the knee together in family prayer, and they look upon an offspring, most of them devoting their hearts to God. I know a household, which stands like a green oasis in the desert of this world. There are sons who preach God's gospel, and daughters who are growing up to fear the Lord, and to love him. Such a household is indeed a pleasant halting-place for a weary soul, in its pilgrimage through this wilderness of life. Oh! happy is that family whom God hath blessed.

But there are other houses, where you will find the children are the trials of the parents. "Although my house be not so with God," may many an anxious father say; and ye pious mothers might lift your streaming eyes to heaven, and say, "Although my house be not so with God." That first-born son of yours, who was your pride, has now turned out your disgrace. Oh! how have the arrows of his ingratitude pierced into your soul, and how keenly do you feel at this present moment, that sooner would you have buried him in his

infancy—sooner might he never have seen the light, and perished in the birth—than that he should live to have acted as he has done, to be the misery of your existence, and the sorrow of your life. O sons, who are ungodly, unruly, gay, and profligate, surely you do not know the tears of pious mothers, or you would stop your sin. Methinks, young man, you would not willingly allow your mother to shed tears, however dearly you may love sin. Will you not then stop at her entreaties? Can you trample over your mother? Oh! though you are riding a steeple-chase to hell, cannot her weeping supplications induce you to stay your mad career? Will you grieve her, who gave you life, and fondly cherished you at her breast? Surely you will long debate, ere you can resolve to bring her grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Or has sin brutalized you? Are you worse than stones? Have natural feelings become extinct? Is the evil one entirely your master? Has he dried up all the tender sympathies of your heart? Stay, young prodigal, and ponder!

Spurgeon.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

THE UNTRAINED TREE.

"HERE is a hard piece of work these two men have to do this morning," said Mr. Bowers to his little son and daughter, James and Mary Bowers. "See what force they are obliged to use to straighten up this tree, and after all, I fear their pains and ingenuity will be exercised in vain."

"They ought to have straightened it while it was young sir," remarked James. "It would have been quite easy to do it then. It would not have needed all those ropes, and there would have been no danger of injuring it."

"You think that would have been the better course, do you, James?"

"I do, indeed, sir; it would now have been a straight, good-looking tree, and all this trouble would have been saved."

"But what caused it to grow so crooked and unsightly?"

"Its nature, I suppose, father."

"Then you think, if we want to have handsome trees, it won't do to leave them to themselves, and trust altogether to nature to straighten and beautify them?"

"Oh, no, sir, it won't do to neglect them; they must be propped up, and pruned, and carefully attended to."

"Do you think so too, my daughter?" said Mr. Bowers to Minnie.

Minnie nodded assent, though she did not fully understand the nature of the question.

"Well, I am glad you think so, my children," observed Mr. Bowers, "because I intend that this tree shall preach a sermon to you. It can't speak, to be sure, but I can fancy it talking to you in this manner:—

"Behold, children, the consequence of being allowed to have one's own way. Had I been looked after and trained in my youth, I should not have to undergo this torture with these ropes and pulleys at my time of life, when it is almost death to me to change my position. Now, children listen to me for a few moments. Whenever your parents correct you for your faults, and you begin to fancy they are dealing harshly and unkindly with you, think of me—think of the old, crooked tree which you behold this morning. Consider how much better it is to be trained in youth than to grow up without restraint, and finally to be numbered with a crooked and perverse generation. 'Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.' Therefore, children, think of me whenever you find your wills opposed to your parents; think how unsightly I have grown in consequence of having my own way, and pray God to make you pliant and obedient to those who have a right to rule over you and govern you, so that when you grow up you may be fair to look upon—ornaments of society—trees of the Lord's right hand's planting.' "

James and Minnie looked alternately at the tree, at Mr. Bowers as he continued speaking, and at each other. James understood the full force of his father's remarks, a blush stole over his face, and for a long time he remained silent. The tree's sermon had the desired effect.

WHAT IS THE FAMILY?

It is a little Empire.—The father is the sovereign. It is an absolute sovereignty, constituted in wisdom, and restrained by affection. It is derived from the fountain of all power. With this authority is connected immense responsibility. No substitute can be found. To the government thus constituted, unreserved obedience is required

that its ends may be fully answered. It is a type of that ultimate submission which will be paid to the Father of all, by His redeemed family in heaven. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father."

The family is a Nursery.—The idea is derived from a material process in nature, to which both animals and plants are subjected. God speaks of planting "a noble vine." Such is the family. It requires nourishing, protecting, maturing, as much as the literal vine. "Christian families are the nurseries of the Church on earth, as the Church is the nursery for heaven." The nursery is a retired place, but pregnant with preparations for eternity. Its germinations are immortal. It is the birth-place of body and mind. Happy, when some auspicious star of hope hovers over it. A train of associations is there commenced, which is imperishable—habitudes into which the very soul is moulded; impressions are engraven, which no lapse of time shall ever obliterate, which eternity itself will but confirm and perpetuate. Like seed, like harvest. "He that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." A mental philosopher has said, that the character is formed before the expiration of the sixth year of our existence. And those years are in the hand of the mother! The mother of Byron would become frantic with passion, and throw the tongs at him, in early childhood. Hence he became more and more ungovernable, in fact, he never knew what self-government was, for he was never taught it. How could such a man, with all his splendour of imagination, write about the sweets of home? He had no home. Not so Cowper, who embalms in fascinating poetry, his recollections of the sanctity of home. The reminiscences of his mother were so delightful, that he could apostrophise in tender numbers even her portrait, when brought to view.

The family is a School.—The parent is the natural teacher. With what beauty of language and solemnity of style, with what Divine authority, does the Lawgiver of Israel appoint a parent to this work, Deut. vi. 7. In the house by the way, in the morning, in the evening, must this work be constantly done. Happy the child who can say—"I was my father's son—he taught me also." Happy the parent who saith—"Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father." Speak not of wealth, of legacies, of estates bequeathed. The best inheritance is the education of the soul for eternity. Alas! how many thousands are trained to a career of guilt and shame.

The family is a Society.—In it are all the elements of the social relations. Numbers, intellect, attachments, sympathies, temperaments, exercise of mind, moral power. Thus it is the very foundation of civil society, whose dignity, advancement, and prosperity in every form, depends upon the same qualities and conditions in the family. This is the only road to the perfection of the social state.

The family is a Sanctuary.—If on earth can be found a refuge from earth's ills, toils, and calamities, it is here. To the man of business, jaded with cares; to the labourer, worn with toil; to the professional man, the clerk, the politician; to the sailor, from the stormy wave; to the soldier, from the heady fight; to all who come from the battle of life, how refreshing to find one spot, where the heart is sure of repose, undisturbed by a doubt that there every face beams with a smile of welcome, every heart bounds with joyful emotion.

The well-ordered family is a little Church.—Believers and their children in covenant with God constitute the essential idea of a church—at least in a qualified sense. Such a family is a miniature of the "whole family named in heaven." "To the church in thy house," said Paul to Philemon. Happy house! Thrice blessed home! God is their Father, Christ their elder brother, the Holy Spirit their sanctifier and guide. That house is the vestibule of heaven. The sacred shrine is there. There the incense of prayer diffuses its sweetness. The melody of praise is there. Death does not break, but sanctifies the link, which binds it to the family above. The grave but opens the passage to glory.

SONG OF A FAMILY.

Oh make our house Thy sanctuary!
Come into us a friendly guest,
And in our circle ever tarry,
Then shall we be for ever blest;
And Thou, a house-mate, shall these walls
Transfigure into royal halls.

Joy dwells, O Lord, where'er Thou stayest;
There blooms a heavenly blessedness:
In silk Thy poorest Thou arrayest,
Though men see but a ragged dress,
The purest high delight is there,
And even in want is wealth to spare.

Thou ever morning us awakest,
And graciously us to prayer dost call;
The household cares thou undertakest,
Thou knowest what is best in all.
And care, though 'twere a leaden load,
Is but a feather's weight with God.

One tender bond all hearts embraces,
A heavenly bond Thy hand hath wove;
The rooms are turn'd to temple-spaces,
Illumined with God's peace and love.
Grace is the sunshine of our home,
And there God's angels go and come.

From the German.

FAMILY IMPORTANCE.

THE institution nearest to the heart of society is the family. The most important office in society is the parental office. The sphere of each family is small, but the number of these spheres is incalculable. As each drop is small, but the sea is vast, so is it in society. Families are the springs of society. Nations, like rivers, run back to rills and springs—sequestered, sheltered, and almost insignificant in their individuality. But thence come the Amazons, the Orinocos, the Mississippis. Although, when we look upon the family in its own separate organization, and think of its imperfections and evils, it seems to be of very little account, yet there is no other institution that for a moment can compare in importance with it.

Declension in religion will be found to be accompanied with carelessness in the family; and the earliest steps of religious reformation ought to take place in the family. For the prophet was inveighing against the sins of his age, and preaching reformation to the people: and the first step toward a true and radical reform was to be in the household. Parents were to practise their duties toward their children, and the children were to practise their duties toward their parents. And if all the families of a nation were to reform, the nation would be reformed.

The church is important; the lecture and prayer-meeting are important; but the most important of all is the family. And all preparation for God's work should begin in the household. Many persons are for ever running round for revivals, careless of home neglectful of children, and seeking their own pleasurable excitement, frequently, in a kind of religious carnival. The regularity of the family, often, is lost in the tumultuous exhilarations of religious excitements. Now, any conception of religious culture and life that leaves the family out, or that is at the expense of the family, is fundamentally wrong, and in the end must be mischievous. Genial and general religious excitements have their benefits. The world could not get on without them. Man is a social being, religiously, as much as in any other respect; and revivals of religion are normal. But, good as are religious excitements, they have evils and dangers, which must be watched against; and this is one of them: when they do not spring as the proper streams out of the family; or when they go forward only as church movements, and not as family movements. The divinity of

revivals may be tested by their effect on the family. If they turn the heart of the parents toward their children, and the hearts of the children toward their parents, they are of God. If they increase the love of the family, if they cause the tendrils of love to draw the members of the family closer and closer to each other, if under their influence blossoms and clusters of love hang in abundance on the family-tree, then you may be sure that it is the true religion that is revived. But if the family has no blessing, and the dew is on the church, you may be in doubt whether it is a divine blessing, or any blessing at all. If religious excitements make home dull, and parental and filial duties and relations tame or tasteless, they may be suspected of being spurious, carnal, worldly. And when there begins to be a desire for a revival of God's work, it is not wrong to desire that the congregation should be inflamed, and that there should be a multiplication of meetings, in which Christians, coming together, may exchange their thoughts and mingle their feelings; but it is wrong to suppose that a revival should begin in the church. The family is a hearth raked up, and the fire must be unraked there. And every one must bring his home-brand and lay it on the altar of the church. Then the revival in the church will be genuine. Sometimes revivals begin in churches, and thence go into families. At any rate, either first or last, every true revival of religion must reach the family. A revival that does not reach the family is imperfect.

I do not wish to take away the sanctity of the church, or lower your idea of its importance in the religious education of men. My object is not to take away from the authority of religious institutions, but to add something to them—namely, the household. I would make you feel that God's first church is there, and that his truest priests and magistrates are there—for king and priest is he that is parent.

A CHAPTER FROM THE LIFE OF MADAME GUYON.

GREAT was my consolation, and never did I experience greater in all my life, than to see in the town of Thonon a place of no great extent, so many souls earnestly seeking God. I mention particularly a poor woman, a laundress. This poor woman was the mother of five children. But her poverty, and the cares of her family, were not the only source of her trouble. She had a husband distempered both in mind and in body. Yet this poor woman, now became, under God's grace, rich in faith, bore all with meekness and patience.

By her personal labours she supported both her five children and her husband.

Among others in the town, there was a shop-keeper, and a man whose business it was to make locks. Both became truly religious, and, as was natural, they became intimate friends with each other. Learning the situation of the poor laundress, they agreed to visit her in turn, and to render her some assistance by reading to her. But they were surprised to learn that she was already instructed by the Lord himself in all they read to her. God, they found, had taught her inwardly by the Holy Ghost, before he had sent, in his providence, the outward aid of books, and pious friends to confirm his inward communications. So much was this the case, that they were willing to receive instruction from her.

This woman attracted the notice of certain persons of some name and authority in the Church. They visited her; and, as her method of worship was somewhat out of church order, they reprovèd her, and told her it was very bold in her to practise prayer in the manner she did. They said it was the business of priests to pray, and not of women. They commanded her to leave off prayer, in the methods in which she practised it, and threatened her if she did not. The woman was ignorant, except so far as she had learned something from the Bible, and as God had inwardly taught her.

God gave her words in reply. She said, "that what she did, was in conformity with Christ's instructions." She referred them to the thirteenth Chapter of Mark, where Christ instructed his disciples to pray; noticing particularly the remark which is added, namely, "What I say unto you I say unto all." "This passage," she said, "authorized all to pray, without specifying priests or friars, or giving them any privilege in this respect above others." She told them, moreover, "that she was a poor and suffering woman, and that prayer helped her; and that, in truth, without the consolation of religion, of which prayer is the appropriate and natural expression, she could not support her trials.

She referred, also, to her former life. She had formerly been without religion, and was a wicked person. Since she had known religion, and held communion with God in prayer, she had loved him, and she thought she could say she loved him with her whole soul, and wished to please him. To leave off prayer were to lose her spiritual life; therefore she could not do it. She also directed their

attention to other persons who had recently come into a state similar to her own. "Take twenty persons," she said, "who are religious, and observe their life. Take twenty other persons who do not practise prayer, and know nothing of the religion of the heart, and make the same observation. And judge then, whether you have any good reason for condemning this work of God." "Such words as these," said Madame Guyon, "from such a woman, might have fully convinced them. But, instead of that, they only served to irritate them the more. They threatened her withdrawal of the privileges of the church, unless she promised to desist from her course; that is to say, unless she promised not only to renounce the reading of the Bible, and the practice of inward and outward prayer, but to renounce Christ himself." Her answer was, "that she had no choice in the matter. The decision was already made. Christ was Master, and she must follow him." They put their threats into execution to some extent; but she remained steadfast.

The persons who represented the dominant part of the orthodox church in Thonon, finding their efforts in a great measure ineffectual, next took the course of ordering all the books, without exception, which treated of an inward religious life, to be brought to them; and they burned them with their own hands in the public square of the place. With this performance, says Madame Guyon, they were greatly elated.

The reader must bear in mind these were all instances of Divine grace, found in the Church of Rome, bearing the date of the year, 1680. The unchangeable character of Popery, both in spirit and practice, is too apparent to need a remark.

A SENSIBLE MOTHER.

Mrs. S. was a poor, industrious woman, living in our village many years ago, who seemed to me to be a pattern of good mothers. Her husband was employed at a brick-kiln, and she assisted in the maintenance of their large family of little children, by going out washing and brewing periodically in a few respectable families. At the time I am first speaking of, they had seven children; the eldest, a boy about ten years of age, who had just begun to work with his father. They had given him a good education at the British School, where

the second boy was still attending. Many of their neighbours thought they kept their boys too long at their books, when they might have been earning something for their support, and they took care to let their opinion be known.

Mrs. S. could neither read nor write herself, and so often had she reason to regret this, that she was doubly anxious to have her children well taught. With her girls her plan was this—she sent them to school till they could read and write well, and then she took them under her own teaching at home. And let me here observe, she made a point of sending them regularly and punctually, and she, moreover, took pains to make them learn their appointed lessons at home. She would make them hear each other repeat them in her presence, whilst standing at the wash-tub or ironing-board. Many a time I have known her to send the eldest girl to school when she would gladly have had her help at home, but she wisely reflected that it would be a loss of time in the end.

Mrs. S. had been a cook as well as housemaid in good families before her marriage, and was, therefore, able to teach her girls everything calculated to make them useful members of society. We all know that it is far less trouble to do a thing ourselves, than to teach an ignorant person how to do it; and, I fear, some mothers are very selfish in this respect. Now Mrs. S. was one who took the trouble to teach her girls early how to do the different work about the house, in a neat, orderly manner. Whilst quite little children, I have known them sweep the room, and tidy the hearth in a creditable way, not because they were naturally more clean and tidy than other children, but simply because their mother had shown them how to do it, and made them do it over and over again till they did it right. This plan answered in the end; for while her neighbour was constantly complaining what a plague her daughter Jane was to her, Mrs. S. could, on the contrary, leave her Mary Ann (just about the same age) to cook for the family, nurse the baby, and take entire charge of the house during her absence on washing days.

Mrs. S. was particularly careful to teach her daughters plain sewing, and they were much assisted at the British School, being able to fix and make a shirt before they left that establishment. Now let me ask any mother with a large family, if it would not be a comfort if the girls could make and mend the clothes? I am sure one and all would answer "Yes." Then let me tell you it will be

your own fault if they cannot help. Teach them early yourself, or send them somewhere to be taught, and you will be surprised to find how useful they may be made. Aye, and they will be far happier children, too; for girls and boys are active by nature, and if you do not employ them usefully, they will only get into mischief.

Perhaps, from what I have said of Mrs. S., you will think her a stern, loud-talking woman, who ordered her children about in a tyrannical manner,—but nothing could be more unlike her. She was of the middle height, plump, fair, with rosy cheeks, mild blue eyes, and a smile so sweet, you could hardly look at her and feel cross at the same time. Her voice was very gentle, and she had an unusually tender way with her children, and with all this she was as firm as a rock. “Harry, my boy, ’tis time for school; get your cap at once;” was quite sufficient. Harry went—he knew his mother meant what she said, and expected to be obeyed. She had made all her children mind what she said when they were little tiny creatures, and when they grew older obedience came naturally to them. Some mothers have a foolish habit of saying, “I will tell your father,” or, “I will call the policeman.” Now children soon know well enough that father is far enough away, and the policeman is not to be had for the calling; and therefore such training does not answer. No, make your child feel he is to obey you, because you are his mother, and do not appeal to any one else. A mother’s word ought to be a child’s law, and this is the key of domestic management.

A TRUTH FOR PARENTS:—The Rev. Dr. Duff, a man of eminent practical wisdom, as well as of eminent piety, says, “I am prepared from experience to say, that in nine cases out of ten, the hoards of accumulated money given to children, by whom they were never earned, and who acquired no habits of industry, or thrift, or laboriousness, prove, in point of fact, rather a curse than a blessing. I am prepared to substantiate that as a matter of fact, not merely from my own knowledge of the subject, but from the statement of men who have been of watchful and observant habits, cultivated not only in Great Britain, but in America. But it is a melancholy fact that so little do parents know of the mass of misery they are accumulating for their children in heaping up these hoards for them—so little do they think how big with misery these hoards are.” Let parents think of this solemn truth, and do good with their wealth instead of treasuring it up for their children.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

MAN'S PART IN THE WORK OF SALVATION.

A Sermon

BY

THE REV. GEORGE HUTCHISON, M.A.,

MINISTER OF BANCHORY-TERNAN.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—PHILIPPIANS ii. 12—13.

LONDON:
JAMES PAUL,
1, CHAPTER-HOUSE COURT, ST. PAULS.

The Mother's Magazine, May and June, 1862.

MAN'S PART IN THE WORK OF SALVATION.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—PHILIP. ii. 12—13.

ONE of the characteristics of the writings of Paul, on which not a little of their peculiar richness depends, is the rapidity with which one idea succeeds another, truth pressing upon truth, and lesson upon lesson, in one continued course of reasoning and exhortation. We have an instance of this in the words before us, in which some of the most important considerations that relate to the Christian life, are expressed in language remarkable for force and condensation. Whether a man be viewed in reference to his fellow man, or to God, or to his own soul, he may here learn, within the compass of a few words, what his true standing is, and in what spirit he ought to bear himself in regard to the highest interests with which he has to do.

The salvation spoken of is obviously not that work which our blessed Saviour has accomplished in our room, and on the ground of which it is that we are reconciled to God. Neither is it our acceptance of what He has done for us; for this is simply an act of faith, and cannot be described as an operation. But, this act and that work being pre-supposed, what the apostle pressed upon his converts of old, and urges upon us now, is to work out the soul's deliverance from the power of evil; or, in other words, to strive to bring our spiritual character into harmony with our high calling, as sons of God, and heirs of immortality.

Viewed in this light, the words, "Work out your own salvation," constitute the centre of the whole. "Work," the apostle would say, "for as there is a work which requires to be done, so it is one which neither apostle, nor priest, nor any other human being can do for you." But some may imagine that God will do it for them: and this is a delusion which must also be dispelled. "Work," he would say, in this view, "for the manner in which God helps you is by working in and through your own spiritual being, inclining you to will, and enabling you to work, so that it is only as you yourselves are found working, that divine aid can be realised." If any, misunderstanding the position in which they are placed

by such reasonings as these, should become vain and presumptuous, they must be warned, that this is the very opposite of the spirit which truly becomes them. "Work," he would say to such, "not in any feeling of high confidence, but with fear and trembling; for of your own selves you can do nothing; and although God can and does work within you, yet it is only of His own good pleasure."

Such appears to have been the train of thought in the mind of the apostle. And we are now to dwell upon it for a little.

I. We are warned, not to depend unduly on our fellow men, in carrying out the work of our salvation.

This warning arises from what Paul says in reference to his absence from the Philippian Church. The sense will become more obvious, if we slightly change the order of his words, and read them thus:—"Work out your own salvation, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence." His being no longer among them, could be no reason why the work should be suspended. His presence was not essential to it, nor was any aid which he could render sufficient for it. It was a work which could be done only by themselves. He had, indeed, been an instrument of great good to them, holding forth the light of salvation among them, and communicating a powerful impulse to their souls. But without thought and exertion on their own part, all his labours must have proved in vain.

And this is a truth for all to ponder. There are many respects in which we may "bear one another's burden;" but, in the deepest sense, "every man must bear his own burden." For amidst the manifold ties and sympathies by which men are connected together, each stands by himself in his own individuality, charged with the interests of an immortal spirit. His soul is distinct from every other, possessed of a distinct existence, furnished with a distinct set of faculties,—reason, conscience, will, affection, an immortal nature with "thoughts that wander through eternity," a spiritual nature whose longings "feel after" the Father of Spirits, in whom alone its rest is found. He has a control over his own thoughts and actions, he is free to choose or reject what is set before him, to yield to or repel the various influences with which he may be plied, to continue in sin or lay hold of salvation. There is something in the breast of every one, which bears witness of this independent personality. Are you not conscious at times of a bitterness which none may share, as well as of a joy with which a stranger may not intermeddle? That fountain of thought and feeling, whose incessant play goes on in silence and in secrecy within you,—is it not felt to be your own, for good or ill, and not another's? The deeper you go down into the depths of your being, the more clearly will this self-isolation be realised, and the more impressive will that loneliness become, in which you dwell apart, each in his own sphere. Every one, too, has his own place in the world, his own path in time. Of any individual who might be singled out in this assembly, it may be said in strictest truth, that his life, with all the facts and incidents of which it is composed, labours, struggles, successes, disappointments, enjoyments, sufferings, from the first dawn of consciousness down to the present hour, is one which has no parallel—such as never was before,—such as never will be again,—a distinct thing in the universe. And how strongly marked is our individu-

ality in the hour of death! Each dies alone. It may be in the bosom of his family, or in the company of his friends, or amid the throng of the crowded city that he receives the summons; and even there he must meet the enemy as much alone and single-handed, as if he had to encounter him in some far-off solitude, where there is no eye to mark the conflict.

In harmony with all this is that principle of self-love, which is implanted in the heart, and by which every one is bound to himself more strongly than to others. By means of this principle, whether it take the form of the love of life, or the desire of happiness, or a tendency towards Him in whom is all fullness of joy, each individual is constituted the guardian of his own interests; and, in a still more peculiar sense, is put in charge of his own character and destiny as a spiritual being.

To whom, then, can you transfer the care of your immortal spirits? How can any one so identify himself with those souls which dwell within you, and which, indeed, constitute your very selves, as to think and believe, desire and determine, love and obey in your room, thus exercising and cultivating, by means of exercise, those spiritual powers and capacities, which are your own and not another's; and which, coming direct from God, place you in a relation of direct and immediate responsibility to Him? The culture of the soul,—this is the work we have to do. It can be done only by means of exercise. And this is an operation strictly personal, inseparably bound up with a man's own being. There are two aspects in which the performance of a work may be viewed,—one, that a certain piece of workmanship be furnished; the other, that the workman be trained in the execution of it. As to the erection of a building, for instance, or the construction of a piece of machinery, if all that is required is, that a certain house be built, or a certain machine constructed, this is a work which one man may do in room of another. But there may be another end in view, and that is, that he to whom the work is assigned may acquire skill and facility in the use of tools and materials, or, in other words, that he may become an expert artizan. As far as this is concerned, every one must be his own workman, applying his own mind and his own hand to that which is given him to do, because it is only by means of practice that the end can be gained. Directions, indeed, may be given, a hint now and then to throw light on a difficulty; but this only to encourage and stimulate, not to supersede one's own exertions. So it is as regards the work to which the Christian is called. Did it consist merely of something outward, something capable of being entirely separated from the individual soul, such as almsgiving, or gifts and labours for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom, one man might do it by way of substitute for another. But deeper far than this, and essentially bound up with the individual, is the real work required. To shrink from the very thought of evil, and cleave, as if by instinct, to that which is good and holy; to have reason and conscience and feeling and desire, each in its own place, and all in mutual harmony; to distinguish between the world and the evil that is in it, so as, while enjoying and improving the one, to overcome the other; to combine the hope of heaven with the toils and trials of daily life, and, while bearing "the image of the earthy," to have the spirit purified and brightened by converse with the things of God, in prospect of a time when it shall "bear the

image of the heavenly ;" this must be the aim and aspiration of the ransomed soul. And how is such a character to be formed ? Only through a course of habitual exercise, on the part of the soul itself. Thought and resolution, effort and conflict, watchfulness and prayer, self-discipline, in short, earnest and long-sustained, all are indispensable. In casting-down the strongholds of sin, and building-up a temple unto God, in reconstructing the disordered mechanism of the spirit, in sowing the seeds of life and reaping a harvest of holy and blessed fruits,—in all this the soul is at once the worker and the workmanship, as well as the little world, so silent though so busy, in which the work is done. Hence, the utmost that in this respect one man can do for another is, to present the truth, in an earnest and prayerful spirit, accompanied by such motives as, under God, are likely to set the soul a-working on its own account. Were the whole Christian Church to concentrate its regards on the salvation of a single soul, all its efforts would be in vain, unless the individual took up the work for himself. On the other hand, were the whole world to combine together, to thwart the salvation of a single soul, it could not prevail, so long as that soul carried on the work within the recesses of its own being. And if we are thus set apart, each in his own isolated independence, with such a momentous work in hand, what shall be said of our responsibility ? Should we not be induced to turn the more to Him, whose gracious voice comes to us saying, " Look unto Me !"

II. We are warned not to depend unduly upon God, in the work of our salvation. We are not to depend upon Him, that is, in any such spirit as to imagine that His grace can supersede our own exertions. " Work out your own salvation," are the words of the apostle, " for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do." And no two things can be more consistent than these,—the assurance, on the one hand, of God's working within you, and the exhortation, on the other, to work out your own salvation. For while it is true, that God works in the soul, and that without His grace we cannot become holy, it is at the same time true, that His working is of a kind which demands the fullest exercise of our own spiritual nature, so that we are never more strongly called upon to will and to work, than when He is acting upon us by His gracious power.

In order to verify this, think of the manner in which the Bible speaks of the work in question. It seems to speak in two ways. In one set of passages, it represents God as the author of every good thought and desire : He begins, and continues, and completes our salvation ; from first to last it is all divine. In other places, we are taught as if man could do something, yea much, indeed everything for himself ; he is reproved, because he will not repent, and turn from sin, and purify his heart from evil : his sinfulness is charged upon himself, a thing he may subdue if he will. At one time we have promise, as if the whole were of God, " A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." While, again, the same thing comes to us, in the form of a command, as if all were in our own power, " Make you a new heart, and a new spirit." Now, however contradictory these two classes of scripture language may appear, they cannot be so in reality. As both are true, they must be reconcilable, And they are capable of being reconciled, only on the ground of the consistency of the two things to which we have referred. The human must work along with the

divine in the same direction, and for the same end: the help of the Spirit from on high can become available, only as man's own spirit is roused into action.

Again, this will appear from the nature of the case. For, as it is only through our own faculties that God works, so it is only in the vigorous and rightly-directed exercise of these faculties that His working can be realised. Divine grace is not a thing to set the soul aside,—not a thing to act in us, as a separate and solitary power. It is an action upon the soul, an impulse given to it, in accordance with its own constitution. The spirit of man is recognised and accepted in all its parts. As the organs and members of the body, eyes and tongue, and hands and feet, remain the same, after being reclaimed from the service of sin as they were before; so, somewhat in the same way, reason and conscience, will and affection, stand where they stood before, and perform their functions according to certain rules inherent in their own nature. It is by means of these, under the Spirit, that we are made to understand and feel and desire and act in regard to what is true and holy. And if the agency of the Spirit is thus carried on through the soul itself, and in no other way, is it not evident that it is only as the soul is up and doing, that the work of grace can be going forward,—only as man himself is earnest and diligent, that any impulse from above can prove effectual? Breathed upon by the Spirit, touched by the living Word, which, indeed, is the breath of the Spirit, the whole soul becomes clearer, and purer, and stronger,—reason more rational, conscience more tender, the will more vigorous and free. And these, so far from becoming less of man, are rendered more truly human than before; while, at the same time, they are turned in the direction of those things in which man's interests most truly lie. And to what end is all this, but that we may apply ourselves to the work which God requires of us? Being made more capable of doing our work, can this be any reason for standing idle? As well might a man plead strength as an excuse for idleness, or genius as an excuse for the want of intellectual exertion, as imagine that because his spiritual capabilities are improved by grace, he can afford to be less intent on the work of his salvation. More being given, more, surely, is required. Power for good implies exertion. The degree in which we are possessed of the one, must ever be the measure of our obligation in regard to the other. The more of heaven's light and strength we receive, the greater must our activity become. "*I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.*"

And in all this man is not like a piece of material mechanism. It is as a free agent that God deals with him, acting upon him by means of such influences, moving him by means of such motives, as do not overbear his own nature, but tend rather to vindicate it, by turning it towards the high ends for which it is designed. Hence, the more we are under the power of divine grace, the more will the work seem as if it were natural to us, and as if it sprung entirely from our own resources. And while never forgetting that without God we can do nothing, we must also remember that we are made of Him to be our own helpers and our own deliverers.

Or look, further, at the analogy which we have of this in the natural world. For here, too, how rich are the promises of God, and how unwearied his benefi-

cence! "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest," we are assured, "shall not cease." In confirmation of this, the seasons roll on in order, the sun shines, the rain falls, and all those various influences are at work by which the earth is rendered fruitful. Yet, who would ever think of allowing his confidence in the bounty of Heaven to supersede his own exertions? How can we prove our reliance on the faithfulness of God but by falling in with the order of His working? and how can this be done but by skill and energy on our own part? "The rain," indeed, cometh down, and the snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but water the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater;" but they do so, not without the labour of man,—he must be diligent, while Heaven is bountiful. "So shall my word be," saith the Lord, "that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it;" but this not without exertion on the part of those to whom it comes,—they must exercise a serious and thoughtful spirit, they must be diligent, while the Lord is gracious.

The grace of the Spirit, then, so far from making no account of man's own nature, implies the vigorous exercise of all its faculties. The working of God within us is the strongest reason why we ourselves should work. According as you trust in Him, and depend upon his aid, you will be earnest, and watchful, and diligent in the work He has given you to do,—guarding your heart against the first risings of evil, and cherishing the smallest germs of truth and holiness,—devising how you may shun the temptations that lie around you, or, if obliged to contend with them, how you may make them the means of new strength to your souls;—in short, bringing into requisition whatever knowledge, or wisdom, or strength you may possess, just as if you had no higher light or power to look to, and as if the issue depended entirely on your own exertions.

III. We are warned not to depend unduly on ourselves. "Work out your own salvation," says the Apostle, "with fear and trembling." Not self-confidence, but self-distrust, giving rise to "fear and trembling,"—that is the spirit in which the work is to be done.

If, in working out our salvation, we feel tempted, at any time, to rely too much on our own exertions, let us remember what we should have been if left in our own helplessness. Aliens from God, and heirs of wrath, not only destitute of power to save our souls, but even unable to accept of salvation, when provided for us and pressed upon us,—left to ourselves we perish. Howbeit we obtain mercy; by grace we are saved. When our feet are thus set upon a rock, and we look back to the "horrible pit" and the "miry clay" out of which we have been raised up, well may a note of trembling mingle with the song of our deliverance. Well, too, may it continue to linger on the tongue ever after. For as it is not in ourselves to reach the rock of safety, so neither is it of ourselves that our future goings can be established. You may as reasonably suppose that the soul can save itself from ruin, as that, by any unaided efforts of its own, it can do the work to which the saved soul is called.

The work being so great, and we so weak,—the work so holy, and we so sinful,—how can we venture to depend upon ourselves? The soul is to be made strong

and holy ; but how shall strength spring out of weakness ? how can that which is so prone to evil yield the fruits of holiness ? Let a man try to keep his heart in a right state, in peace with itself, in goodwill to man, in piety to God, even for a single day, and even in solitude, far from every disturbing influence, and he will find he has attempted what is far beyond his powers. How much more hopeless must the task be felt to be when it has to be done amidst the temptations of the world, where there are so many things to disquiet and harden the heart, and to lower the tone of spiritual character. And the work is not a thing of a day, but of a lifetime—the grand work of life. Day after day it must be going on, side by side with every other work, and, indeed, when every other work is standing still. For it is our work for life, alike in health and in sickness, in joy and in sorrow, amid the excitements of the world as well as in the hour of solitude. Nor is it the world only that is against us. There is an invisible agency, nearer than the world, yet acting often by means of it,—an agency which can insinuate the world into our deepest seclusion, and which would fill our “chambers of imagery” with sins and vanities worse than those of open day. With this power we have to contend while engaged in the work of our salvation. While working with one hand, we must fight with the other. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” And who is sufficient for this ? In what strength, or skill, or armour of our own ?—how, but as strengthened from above, and armed with “the whole armour of God,” shall we be “able to stand against the wiles of the devil ?” Not only are we unequal to the work assigned us, but, as we must also bear in mind, we cannot help opposing it. Even when salvation is in progress, sin remains, mingling its conflicting elements with the power of grace. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary, the one to the other ; so that we cannot do the things that we would.” Here are two rival principles, sin setting itself against grace, and striving to undo its work—sin, which we would restrain and conquer if we could, and which we disclaim as at variance with our cherished principles, “It is no more I that do it,” but which, nevertheless, is our sin, and, as such, makes us guilty of contending against Him who is so gracious to us. What self-distrust and lowliness should this inspire ! What “fear and trembling” must mark the soul’s life in the midst of such a conflict ! Its current, like the ocean tide, trembles as it moves, borne upwards, on the one hand, by the action of a heavenly power, and, on the other, drawn down by earthly influences.

And how much will your success depend on this spirit of self-distrust ! It is he that “thinketh he standeth” that is most in danger of falling : to be strong in one’s self is to be but a poor weakling in the things of God : none so needy as he who feels he is in need of nothing. On the other hand, let us know our want, and weakness, and danger, and at once we become strong and safe, as if possessed of all things, as if able to do all things. Distrust of yourselves will not tend to relax exertion, but rather to stimulate to greater earnestness. It will lead you to strive against the infirmity, and sin, and deceitfulness of heart, of which you are

conscious, and to abound more and more in the work of the Lord. "*Let us fear,*" says one, writing to the Hebrew Christians of old, "lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." And then, as a consequence of this fear, he adds—"Let us *labour* to enter into that rest, lest any man fail after the same example of unbelief." Paul felt he was nothing—felt he could do nothing; yet how earnestly did he press forward, and how rigorous the discipline which he imposed on himself. "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." While the fear arising from self-distrust will thus urge the Christian to do what he can for himself, it will also induce him to lay hold of every help and encouragement within his reach. The experience of saints who have trod the same path before him, so rich in counsel and in warning; the sympathies of others who are still on the way, and who are often, like himself, tried with fears and difficulties; above all, the voice of the Church, in word and prayer, in sacramental symbol and holy fellowship;—to all this he will give earnest heed, in proportion as he feels his own insufficiency. And will not the same spirit dispose us to look, with more humble and eager hearts, unto Him who alone, of His good pleasure, can work in us, both to will and to work effectually? And what spirit so ready as this to attract His aid? He "*resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.*" He who improves what he has, and does what he can—to him more will be given, that he may work more abundantly. He will labour and strive as earnestly as if all depended on himself, and yet with a humility which ascribes the whole to God. This is the grand law of the Divine life in the soul—the hinge which knits together man's weakness and God's omnipotence—the bond which harmonizes the gracious influences, that descend from Heaven, with those human exertions, ever becoming more and more truly human, which are called up in the depths of our own being,—the secret, in short, by which contradictions are reconciled, and impossibilities rendered easy, while man is saved and God glorified.

Observe, now, the aspect in which the work of which we have been speaking is here presented. It is put in the form of obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle speaks of Him as one whom "*God hath highly exalted . . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that He is Lord.*" Then follow the words, "*As ye have always obeyed*" Him that is, who is raised on high, "*so now work out your own salvation.*" Hence the work of salvation to which we are called is identical with obedience to Jesus Christ.

And in what other form could the work become so easy or so delightful? The obedience which is demanded by the high and stern law of imperial will may be recognised as right and reasonable, and we may strive to yield it, under a sense of duty. But the work is cold and uncongenial, awakening no sympathy, and yielding no delight. God, indeed, is love; He condescends to be called our Father; and we are assured that sooner will "a woman forget her sucking child" than He can forget His people. Yet, were this declared in words merely, or in the gifts of an all-present and omnific bounty, our sense of His love would be too

vague to stir the heart with emotion, or melt it into tenderness, or draw it forth in devotedness. But in Christ that Divine love, of which men had heard with the ear, and of which so many scattered rays were seen in nature and in providence, found a new centre, and that centre a human heart. The man, Christ Jesus, is the grand manifestation of the love of God. So that it is no longer vague, distant, transcendental, but a human thing in the midst of the world, still radiant indeed with the glories of Divinity, yet proving its presence by tears, and agonies, and death for man's sake, and thus capable of awakening an echo in the human heart. He in whom God has thus revealed His love has been "set as King on His holy hill of Zion." Incarnate love, then, is the Lord we are to serve. To obey Him in love,—that is the work of your salvation. Let your hearts turn to Him—let His love abide in you—and the work will be easy.

Nor is there anything in the work you have to do which He has not exemplified in Himself. He has gone before you. He has lived in your nature, amid the trials of the world, and in conflict with the powers of darkness. And what so well calculated as this to animate the hearts of His followers? The prince, who withdraws himself to some serene and lofty eminence, and sends forth his laws among those who are far below, compassed with danger, and struggling with difficulties, to which he is a stranger, can never be an object of warm and enthusiastic loyalty. The commander, who shrinks from fatigue and danger, and disdains the low level on which the realities of war are encountered, will fail to inspire his troops with that devotion to his service, which is the surest pledge of victory. But let the prince or the commander descend in some measure to the condition of those who are under him, so as to sympathise with them in their difficulties, and share in their danger, and lead the way before them in every emergency that may arise, and a spirit of enthusiasm will be kindled which will infuse into obedience a feeling of delight. This is what Jesus Christ has done. "The captain of our salvation" has been made "perfect through sufferings." It was "because He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death," that He has received "a name which is above every name." The relation in which you stand to him is that of *followers*—going where He has gone, doing what He has done, fighting as he has fought. What ardour should the thought of this inspire! How smooth the path of self-denial; how easy your trials and conflicts;—when you look to that victorious Leader, who has cleared the way before you! "Let the same mind be in you which was also in Him."

And how animating the prospect which lies before you. The glory in which Jesus now dwells is the issue of the labours and sufferings through which he passed on earth. It is because He endured the Cross that he wears the crown. And His followers are to be partakers of His glory. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Conflict and trial, temptation and sin, weakness and fear and despondency, shall be left behind for ever. The soul, radiant with holiness, shall mark the consummation of the work you have now to do. The palm waved by that saintly hand shall prove that the victory has been

won. "Be ye stedfast, therefore, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

How momentous the work which is thus assigned you! What are the mightiest works of earthly enterprise, even when concentrating upon themselves the resources of states and empires, and when carried to the most prosperous issue, but visions that must soon disappear and leave no trace behind them? What is this world itself, with all its beauty and magnificence, those shining heavens and this rejoicing earth,—what is it all but a passing scene which is doomed to perish? But the work to which you are called, as followers of Christ,—an immortal spirit to be made pure and perfect, and meet for a place in God's holy Heaven,—is one of surpassing grandeur. It shall survive the wreck of worlds, and stand forth as a solitary memorial of time, when all its other glories shall have passed away. "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."

Sketches and Essays.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS.

God has framed the family so that nothing can exceed the advantage which parents have in rearing their children. Everything is prepared so as to make it possible for parents to discharge their duty toward their children. They take the child before all other influences. None whispers before the mother into the child's ear. None gains ascendancy over the child before the parent. Before character is formed, before even initial habits are formed, before any tendencies whatever are developed, from the pulp to the gristle, the parent has the child, and it is between these that the work is to be done that makes the bone or frame of character. It would not be fair, perhaps, if our children, before coming to us, had been in the hands of intermediate parties, and came with habits fastened upon them, that the parent should be held accountable for those sins of the child of which he is in no wise the cause. But the child is yours before it is anybody else's; and if anything is to be written on it, you are to write it. You may not be responsible for the condition of its body, the state of its health, or the combinations of its faculties, but you are responsible for the work of teaching and training it—of which, more hereafter.

The parent receives the child in a condition perfectly fitted to be moulded and stamped. The child comes to us with all natural adaptations for taking impressions. It is sympathetic, trustful, and imitative. It knows only to follow us, and imitate us, and believe us. The child sees everything through the parents' seeing; hears everything through the parents' hearing; believes everything through the parents' believing. If my parents had told me fantastic stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, they would have been true to me. So true are such things when told to children by their parents, that, if you teach your child Brahminism, forty years can scarcely suffice to shake it out of him. If you teach your children Catholicism, they will be Catholics; and if you teach them Protestantism, they will

The Mother's Magazine. July, 1862.

be Protestants. The hardest work we have to do in this world is to correct the mistakes of parents in the education of their children.

Now although this may have no bearing in respect to the child's accountability in free agency, it illustrates the fact that the parent receives the child into his hands when it is in that condition in which impressions can most easily be made upon it.

So many are the responsibilities to which one subjects himself when he undertakes the rearing of an immortal being, that if, when standing at the beginning of life, we had a vision of what it was to be a parent, and of what would be the fate of our children, I do not believe one in ten thousand would dare to assume the parental relation. And yet we go on and assume that relation heedlessly and thoughtlessly.

Parents, then, are to accept their children under these high responsibilities. They are to accept them, in the first place, for their bodily benefit. This is a point that scarcely needs to be enlarged upon. There are, however, many instructions pertinent to it which might be given with profit, because parents having the care of children's bodies are usually very little informed as to the laws of health. If there had been laws of health laid down in the written Bible, parents would have thought that they were responsible for the bodily condition of their children. But the written Bible is not the only volume that God has given us. There are two Bibles. One is a printed book, and the other is nature. And the laws of God in nature are as much laws as those in the printed book. You are as much bound to find out and obey the former as the latter. The pains and penalties of violation are just as certain in the one case as in the other. And if God has imposed upon you the duty of educating a child for another world, and if that education is associated with the child's bodily condition, you are bound to know how to bring the child up healthily. Much attention should be given by parents to this subject; for many of the infelicities of children spring from their physical state. Many and many a child has been spoiled by reason of wrong training in this regard. The life of many a child has been a fruitless endeavour to overcome the mischiefs done to his health through the ignorance of parents.

But the body is of the least importance. The child is not merely to be prepared for the full possession and enjoyment of its own bodily powers, as a splendid animal; it is to be prepared for its

social condition in life ; and the household is the school in which it is to be taught principles and duties which shall make it a good neighbour, a good citizen, a good member of society ; and the parent is to be the teacher.

But that is only a part. All those elements which are to shape the child's after-life on earth, have their seed-form in the family ; and the parent stands to teach the child in these things.

But that is not all. The parent undertakes to teach the child so that it shall be fit, not alone for this world, but for the world to come. You are to train your children for immortality and glory. You are to teach and train your children, both. You are first to teach them all true ideas that are needful. But when you have done that, you have only half performed your duty. You are to train them in those ideas also. "Train up a child in the way he should go ; and when he is old he will not depart from it." Many a child has been taught in the way he should go, and yet departed from it when he became old. Teaching is not enough. It must be followed by training—that is, nurture. We are to bring our children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The nurture of children, the training of children, is the practising them in things which we teach : the developing them into right habits of disposition and conduct ; the establishing them in a true life. In the family ought to begin, not only physical training, and social training, and secular training (though these should have an important place in the discipline and government of every family), but that training which is spiritual.

When children are born to you, the most solemn book is opened, so far as you are concerned, that ever is opened, except that which relates to your own soul's fate. The account that begins to be incurred when parents rejoice because a child is born to them, is the most solemn account that ever is incurred, aside from one's own individual duty toward God. I do not mean that all the misconduct and evil-endings of the child are to come back upon the parents, and that there is to be in the child no free will, so that no individual account can belong to him. For if a parent has cleansed his skirts of his children, the guilt of their sins will rest on their head and not on his. But unless the parent can show that the child's misconduct and wreck of eternity are not attributable to any fault of his, the weight of the child's condemnation will be divided—no, it will not be divided : it will rest undivided on the child's head, and undivided on the parent's

head. It is a responsibility assumed by every parent, to look after the welfare, temporal and eternal, of his child. If God had sent to him an angel, with a scroll of heavenly writ, saying, "I send to school you my well-beloved child: take it, teach it, and bring it back to heaven, and let its education be the test of your fidelity"—if God had sent to the parent such a missive, his responsibility would not be greater or more real than that which is laid upon us when we undertake to bring up children. They are not simply playthings, although they do make playthings. They are not mere little pleasure-bells, although no bells ever ring so sweetly. They are not instruments of music, and pictures, and flowers of dear delight in our households, that we may enjoy them, and that they may enjoy themselves. They are not frolicsome kittens and singing-birds, for our pleasure and their own. They are God's immortals. They are sent forth to make an earthly pilgrimage; and you are their schoolmasters and pilots. It is a solemn thing to have such a charge put into your hands.

THE ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE.

THE parent receives the child into an involuntary atmosphere of love, which is that summer in which all good dispositions must grow. God has ordained this as the atmosphere which shall surround the child in his earlier years. In later life, the child comes into companionship; and God has ordained other co-ordinate affections to rise up around about him then. So that, in the household, characteristically, the atmosphere is love. Justice, and all other feelings, in the family, act in the sphere, and under the control, of parental love. And nowhere else is love so much the predominating element. It is not in official relations. It is not in the administration of the governor of a state. It can be nowhere except in the family; and it could not be there as a matter of volition. It is so arranged in the Divine economy that the parent shall love the child, and be controlled by love in administering for the child. Love is the atmospheric condition in which we are to mould and teach the child. The child is given to us before it is given to anybody else; it is given to us in a mouldable state; and a summer is provided in which advantage can be taken of this mouldable state.

Besides, the family is sheltered from contact, and temptation, and

interruption. It is not like a ship on the deep. It is more like a boat in some protected harbour. There we have our children for twelve or fifteen years before anybody but ourselves can have much to do with them. God, as it were, divides the time of their earthly existence, and makes a large portion of it subject to our control. Sixty years being far beyond the average period of human life, for full one quarter of the time allotted to our children in this world God shelters them, and makes them inaccessible to outward influences, and appoints us to be their teachers, in order that they may be prepared to go through the other three-quarters of their life.

The family is the only institution in which one can repel all invasion, and all despotism from state and from meddling priests. A man's household, even under arbitrary governments, is regarded as more sacred than any other place. Even tyrants do not interfere with the relations of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister. The family is free in all countries where civilization prevails. Where a crown is on the head, and an iron sceptre is in the hand, there is liberty at least in the household. Where the superstitious priest has been shedding twilight and darkness, and making bats and owls speak, calling them birds of heaven, there still has been the lamp of true instruction burning on the altar of the family. The family has been a church in the wilderness thousands of times when the outward church had gone away into captivity; and thousands of times there has been liberty in the family when there was no liberty in the state.

Such, then, are the circumstances in which we are placed as parents. God has put our children into our hands with the declaration, that they are his; that they have in them the germ of immortality; that their existence has a beginning but no ending; and that he commits them to our charge, that we may fit them for the future life that is prepared for them. Upon every parent God has laid the responsibility of opening and developing the child's mind, and carrying it along to manhood. And it will be a very fearful account that we shall have to render, as to what we have done for and with our child.

Oh! well he knew our frame, who appointed our heaven to consist of love. It is a dangerous thing to be trifled with; there is something so sweet in loving and being loved.

WHY CHILDREN DIE.

THE reason why children die, says "Hall's Journal of Health," is because they are not taken care of. From the day of their birth they are stupified with food, choked with physic, sloshed with water, suffocated in hot rooms, steamed in bed-clothes. So much for indoors. When permitted to breathe the pure air, once a week in summer, and once or twice during the winter months, only the nose is allowed to peer in daylight. A little later they are sent out with no clothes at all on the parts of the body which most need protection. Bare legs, bare arms, bare neck, girted middles, with an inverted umbrella to collect the air and chill the other parts of the body. A stout, strong man goes out on a cold day with gloves and overcoat, woollen stockings, and thick double-soled boots. The same day, a child of three years, an infant of flesh, and blood, and bone, and tender constitution, goes out with shoes as thin as paper, cotton socks, legs uncovered to the knees, neck bare; an exposure which would disable the nurse, kill the mother outright, and make the father an invalid for weeks. And why? To harden them to a mode of dress which they are never expected to practise!

PARENT AND CHILD.

How often in the domestic circle there comes a day when the sky is sombre, and the spirit in sympathy with it! Some unlovely temper seems to have taken possession of some youthful bosom there—a son's or a daughter's. A word of parental advice volunteered upon any not very grave matter—the costume for the day—a project for the evening—an outfit for a cold walk or ride—the occupation of the hour—delay in preparing for some stage of the day's progress that approaches with the next chime of the clock—falls upon the heart of the listener like a drop of water in boiling fat. The restiveness of the spirit expresses itself in lowering looks, or a gesture of impatience, or impetuous locomotion, or perhaps in most undutiful words. The whole of it is a most undutiful demonstration. Your suggestion was wise and prudent; if it were not, it was well intended, prompted by affectionate carefulness; if we see not even this, but only a kind of habit of interference, which will not suffer any scheme to be complete unless it have thrust in some element

of its own—if it were your carefulness, rather uncalled for, and, in some respects, even ridiculous; it was yet the suggestion of one concerning whom the Divine lips have proclaimed to that perverse recusant, “Honour thy father and thy mother.” Most likely it was a suggestion of simple good-will, thoughtful, tender, and provident. If it had been unwelcome—judged needless—particularly annoying—it should have been received with respect and deference. Your first emotion is perhaps one of surprise. You had not the slightest expectation of kindling such a heat. You insinuate, perhaps, an exclamation of astonishment. That is still more unfortunate; for when one is losing self-command, nothing completes the disaster more surely than to have it said, “You are getting angry.” The red heat is becoming white there. Your parental dignity and authority are at hazard. You cannot acquiesce in being so sharply set aside. You cannot pass over the offence unnoticed. All subordination is at an end if things go on so. So you feel that you must assert yourself at once, take the matter in hand before it goes farther, and deal with that perversity on the spot. Had you not better wait? If the rebuke you are about to administer is just the thing—well conceived, and calculated to do good—it will keep. The stomach of the patient is too irritable to take the dose just now. Perhaps you would not weigh it out with a steady hand. As to the assertion of dignity, there is peril of some loss of dignity in having “a scene.” Silence and reserve are wonderfully conservative of dignity. Your dignity does not rest on a very broad foundation if, against such a breeze, you must stretch out your hand so nervously to bolster it up. The morrow dawns, and the clouds have cleared away. Rebellion has put off its cloudy look. Smiles play where there was pouting yesterday. Watch now your opportunity. In the calmest, blindest hour of this serene weather, lay your hand gently on that other younger hand. With loving seriousness look upon the eyes that are already cast down, and veiled with droopings lids, and say all that is in your heart. The guilt and danger of cherishing such feelings as those which gave you so much pain, you may faithfully show. You have the beloved offender at advantage. Conscience has already been at work before you. Your own feelings appear all the deeper and stronger, because they have kept themselves alive till another sun rose. Your first forbearance is now appreciated, seen to be not a weakness, to carry in it no promise of final impunity, consistent with the most settled purpose, and noble in its

self-control and kindly generosity. Now the tears start on those drooping lashes; humble words give the utterance of an humble spirit. "I was very wrong." The rebuke sinks down deep in the heart, never to be forgotten, and you have won your child."

Certainly this is better than to have fought the battle out the day preceding. You would have conquered, but not in the same way—not with the same weapons—not with the same subduing effect upon that disloyal temper. A resentful memory would have hung over the battle-field like a sulphureous cloud, as often as those young eyes looked back. This is not saying that you should yield at the time the point originally in debate. It may be very important to prevent exposure, or impropriety, or worse mischiefs, that your suggestion should be made instantly imperative. But you can secure that without trying the case as one of filial disrespect. You can say calmly, "It must be as I wish, my child," and yet utter not one word of reproof.

The great secret of administering rebuke wisely and impressibly, in most instances, lies very much in this simple precaution—it includes so much more than mere waiting.

A LETTER TO A NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS.—I would address you in the words of good Philip Henry, who was accustomed to say on a similar occasion, "I wish you all holiness, and there is no doubt you will have happiness." I hope you possess those qualities of mind and of heart which form the basis of conjugal felicity. I trust you have sought divine direction, and that, under a guidance which cannot err, you have been led to take this important step. By many, however, it is totally overlooked; and, as Mr. Jay remarks, they contract marriages on considerations purely accidental, or worldly; as if they wished to marry, not to be happy; to gain each other, not to enjoy. Who forms this alliance as a Christian? Who enters it with those views and motives which the Gospel supplies? Who consults God in the undertaking? Who has the banns published in heaven, to ascertain what impediments are pleaded there? May the God of heaven, who instituted and blessed the marriage state, pour upon you his richest, choicest favours! May he bless you in providence by liberal bestowments of temporal good things; and to these may he

add a better portion, enriching your souls by spiritual communications.

You will see the duties of Christian husbands and wives in Ephesians v. 22—23, and in 1 Peter, iii. 1—7. Enter, my friends, the temple of revelation—bow before the divine oracle—say, “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?” “Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.” Extract from the Scripture the mind of God concerning yourselves individually. Let not the husband take away the duties of the wife, nor the wife the duties of the husband; but let both take respectively their own, and say, “Oh that my feet were directed to keep thy statutes!” “Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.” “I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.”

I hope that you will conscientiously regard devotional exercises. It is impossible for a Christian to live without prayer. He prays alone, and he prays with others. The field, the temple, the closet, the family, are all with him places “where prayer is wont to be made.” How necessary is prayer in the marriage state! How does social devotion sweeten social life! It obtains strength for its duties, and succour for its trials. It gives a direction to the mind, by which we escape numberless snares; an elevation, by which we rise above a thousand vexations. How it sanctifies our comforts! How it prepares the soul for disappointment, or success! How it calls down the blessing of heaven to “attend the labour of our hand!” How it attracts the Divine presence, and places him within our reach, “who is nigh unto all them that call upon him; to all that call upon him in truth!” Of a prayerful habitation it may be said, How glorious is this place! “This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” “The voice of rejoicing and of salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.” O happy mansion! where all the members of the family “dwell together in unity,” living with each other here as those who expect to be associates for ever; maintaining a friendship, the centre of which is religion, the duration of which is eternity, the bands of which are “faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus.”

I invite, then, the God of the families of the whole earth, who loves the dwellings of Jacob, to come and take up his abode with you; erect an altar for his worship, and offer daily the sacrifice of prayer, and never be ashamed to avow your attachment to him and

his service. Seek to make those arrangements in your household, which shall secure time for the regular and daily exercise of devotion. Let the Sabbath be sacred to religion, and suffer not its hallowed hours to be infringed on by unlawful indulgences, or ceremonious visitings. Sunday visitings are much to be reprobated; they disturb the repose of the family, and convert what ought to be a day of rest into a day of unusual bustle; they deprive the servants of all opportunity of attending the means of grace; and they consume, in unprofitable conversation, that precious time which should be devoted to God and the soul. Guard against all this at first setting out, since it is much easier to avoid than to break off pernicious customs. Permit me to add, that having made religion the basis of domestic happiness, let your abode be the scene of order, frugality, temperance, hospitality, and friendship.

Beware of raising your expectations of felicity too high. Perfect bliss is a flower which once bloomed in Eden, ere sin entered; but since that period, it has never arrived at equal perfection: in some favourable situations it yet produces a few flowers, and a little fruit, and the greatest degree of it may be expected, where there is an union of heart and soul, in the conjugal state; but, under the most favourable circumstances, expect trials; remember that the serpent yet lurks in the most pleasant bowers of the earthly paradise; your greatest trials may arise out of your choicest comforts; and never forget that the firmest and most endearing bonds may soon be burst asunder by death; and the bridal ornaments may, ere long, be exchanged for the funereal shroud, and the bridal chamber for the silent sepulchre. May you long be spared as mutual helps and comforts; and may the separation, which death will assuredly occasion, be followed by a reunion in the heavenly paradise, where all will be uninterrupted harmony and love, and where perfection in bliss will be crowned with eternal duration.

As ivy twines around the tree,
And holds it in a close embrace,
So may they, Lord, both cleave to thee,
Upheld and strengthen'd by thy grace.

As partners of the grace of life,
May they each other's burden bear;
May mutual love exclude all strife,
And kindness banish every care.

Thus blest and happy may they live !
And when they're called by death away,
The wreck of time may they survive,
And reign with thee in endless day !

Wishing you the best of blessings, in time and for ever, I am,
your affectionate friend and pastor, &c.,

S. SIMPSON.

NOT AT HOME.

"I NEVER," says a lady, "sent that message to the door but once, and for that once I shall never forgive myself. It was more than three years ago ; and when I told my servant that morning to say 'Not at home,' to whomsoever might call, except she knew it was an intimate friend, I felt my cheeks tingle, and the girl's look of surprise mortified me exceedingly. But she went about her duties, and I about mine, sometimes pleased that I had adopted a convenient fashion, by which I could secure more time to myself, sometimes painfully smitten with the reproaches of my conscience. Thus the day wore away, and when Mr. Lee came home, he startled me with the news that a very dear and intimate friend was dead.

"'It cannot be,' was my reply, 'for she exacted of me a solemn promise that I would alone sit by her dying pillow, as she had something of great importance to reveal to me. You must be misinformed ; no one has been for me'—here suddenly a horrible suspicion crossed my mind.

"'She sent for you, but you were not at home,' said Mr. Lee innocently ; then he continued, 'I am sorry for Charles, her husband ; he thinks her distress was much aggravated by your absence, from the fact that she called your name piteously. He would have sought for you, but your servant said she did not know where you had gone. I am sorry. You must have been out longer than usual, for Charles sent a servant over here three times.'

"Never in all my life did I experience such loathing of myself, such utter humiliation. My servant had gone further than I, in adding falsehood to falsehood, and I had placed it out of my power to reprove her by my own equivocation. I felt humbled to the very dust, and the next day I resolved, over the cold clay of my friend, that I would never again, under any circumstances, say, 'Not at home !' "

NOT WRATH, BUT LOVE.

“Provoke not your children to wrath.”—EPHESIANS VI. 4.

NEVER punish a child when you are angry. Wait till you are cool. If you punish in a passion, you are but rousing bad passions in return. You are souring your child's temper, and hardening his young heart.

We greatly increase the need of punishment by punishing too often; and by dealing out the same correction for small offences as for great. You thus wound your child's sense of justice. Your child may have broken a plate, or spilt a jug of milk through accident. Or he may have done so in wanton disobedience. The loss to the mother is just the same; and the trouble is the same. But the offence is widely different, and the punishment ought not to be the same. Never mistake an accident for a fault.

Never forget that the true secret of a mother's sway over the mind and conduct of her children is Love. If she is loving and thoughtful towards her children, she will generally meet with love and obedience in return. We shall generally reap according to the seed we sow. If we sow the bitter seeds of unkindness, we shall mostly reap their bitter fruits. If we sow the sweet seeds of kindness and tenderness, with God's blessing we shall mostly gather the dutiful fruits of love and obedience.

It is never too soon to begin to sow the seeds of love. Begin at once. Even the little baby on your lap knows the difference between a loving smile and an unloving look, when it turns from its mother's bosom to the face bending over. The smile of love is soon answered by baby's own smile. Love for love—smile for smile.

Mothers! these things are no trifles. I know a mother, a small and feeble woman, crippled by rheumatism, and often unable to lift an arm, or to move a foot. Six tall, stout sons grew up around her. It was beautiful to see the loving reverence of these great boys for this little mother. To dispute her words, or to disobey her wishes, never seemed to enter their honest heads. And now, though scattered over the world, each in his own little world of action, the lads still remember the crippled mother, praying for them at home. “What would mother think?” is still a question which settles many a conflict with sin and temptation. The secret of her authority and of their obedience is love. And the secret of her love is the knowledge of a God of love who has given us the twofold exhortation, “Children obey your parents—Parents, provoke not your children to wrath.” (Ephes. vi. 1—4.)

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

SUPPOSE a mother never to train her child to habits of usefulness, industry, obedience, and the duties due from him to his parents and to God, in what would she be better than the mere animals who graze on the pasture? They love their young, they will provide as well as they can for them, and they will defend them even to the peril of their own lives. And what do careless, unthinking mothers do more than the beasts of the field, if they do not inform their children's minds, and tell them of their never-dying souls, and of that account they must render at the bar of God.

There is one view of the subject which seems very important we should remember: instinct alone will never teach you to train your child for Heaven—instinct teaches you to love your child—instinct teaches you to feed your child—instinct teaches you to defend your child. But all this the brutes of the creation have in common with ourselves; and here we can tell the reason, here we can solve the problem, why so many mothers send forth their children into the world as the bird pushes its nestling from its green home, and the wild beasts of the field their young. Many a youth knows no more of his own heart, or of his duty to God and man, than the wild ass's colt. Now, what is there wanting, think you, in mothers who thus act, to enable them to perform their duty as God in His word requires? There is wanting that moral principle which alone distinguishes us from the mothers of the brute creation around us. We must possess this moral principle before we can perform our duty to our children, and look forward to meeting them at the bar of God without dismay. Without this we shall never seek God for ourselves, nor resolve to put forth our energy to train our children.

We are quite sure that many children will blame their unfaithful parents at the last dread day, for neglecting them in their early days. But we have often heard mothers blamed, even here; and even sometimes where we had reason to hope the parents knew something of the fear of God. We will give you an instance. An only son, of respectable but misjudging parents, was sent to school, after a few years of home training, where he gave early intimation of the truth of Solomon's remark, that "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." Reports of his improper conduct reached the ears and pierced the hearts of

his fond parents, and called forth repeated expostulation. But they had neglected him too long, and now he would heed none of their counsels. One day the parents wrote a letter to him, in the bitterness of their grief. They told him of their anxiety—their sleepless nights—their tears and prayers on his behalf; they warned him of his danger—they implored him to listen to the counsels of an affectionate father, a kind but heart-broken mother. The son read the letter soberly—sat for a moment as if in deep thought—the muscles of his face betraying the workings of a troubled conscience. Suddenly springing upon his feet, with a look of ineffable contempt he dashed the letter into the fire exclaiming, “There, now let the old man and woman warn, write letters, pray and whine. It is of no use. A good whipping well laid on, ten years ago, would have done more to save me.” Some few years after, this same only son was seen on a public road, reeling with intoxication, and pouring forth a torrent of profane and obscene language—a reckless, wicked young man, walking in the broad road ending in destruction. Here we see a false tenderness leading to indulgence—indulgence fostering the corruptions of the heart—unsubdued passions and unrestrained propensities hurrying him on to ruin. Too late the parents saw their folly, and the son charges his ruin upon their lack of early and proper training, even on earth; what will he do when they meet in judgment?

A minister was one day speaking to a little girl that he held on his knee, while the young mother was listening. Some time after he received the following letter:—

“My dear Sir,—Do you remember, when you were in our neighbourhood, you once held my little girl on your knee? If you can remember this circumstance, you will perhaps also remember saying to her that you hoped she would not have a prayerless mother! You did not know how deep your words sunk into my heart—how fearfully they sounded; it was like the sudden plunging of a dagger. I was that dreadful person! I was a prayerless mother! Satisfied with the happiness I enjoyed, I forgot the source. I had forgotten prayer—forgotten God! You can conceive, then, the startling effect of your words—the host of recollections they awakened—till memory ceases, I shall never forget their force. I thought, must my child have a prayerless mother, when for me so many prayers were offered—so many prayers urging their way to heaven? I thought of the

time when a fair, fond being had clasped my tiny hands and taught me to pray—to love God ; and should my child have no such guide ? should no such prayer ascend for her ? Oh, it was an awful thought ! I saw the image of that sainted mother, who had been the guardian of my childhood, mournfully reproaching me—tears were in her gentle eyes—she seemed to weep for my child and me. I tried to pray ; the effort seemed vain—I could only clasp my babe, with unutterable yearnings that it might be better than its mother. There was a fearful and a constant struggle in my breast, should I—could I—give up the world ? I thought much on the subject of religion, but I could not bring my mind to love God—to desire Jesus above all things. Why ? I did not pray—that sufficiently accounts for my indecision. At length I was laid on a bed of sickness—I thought it was the bed of death. There God manifested himself as my friend—He promised to take care of my children—I feared not to leave them with Him. A tide of love and peace rushed in upon my heart—my joy has remained—my love to God does not waver, and my children will no more, I trust, have a prayerless mother !”

May all our children feel they have prayers going up to heaven for them ! Our heavenly Father has placed in our hands, as mothers, an influence of conduct, example, and precept, almost boundless, over our children—let us be faithful. It is said of a Grecian mother (who was a heathen), that when Alexander the Great was passing in the crowd with his tall helmet and waving plumes, she raised up her son above her head, and said to him, “Look there ! that is Alexander the Great, and you must be another.” Let us take our dear children and point them to Jesus, the blessed Redeemer ; tell them His history—tell them of His love to little children—tell them of His fervent midnight prayers—of His sufferings for the sinful children of men—of His bright example—and say to them, “There, my children, follow Jesus ; love Jesus, and walk in his footprints.” And then see to it that they are able to say, “He was my mother’s pattern—my mother’s God—I had a praying mother.”

PECULIAR CHILDREN.

“THE child is so peculiar, I dare not punish him. The doctor said I must be careful not to excite him ; every thing goes right to his head !”

This was said by way of an apology for a very decided outbreak on the part of young Charley. His peculiarity consisted, this time,

in not being willing to come into the house when called. The mother insisted, and Charley insisted; but the result was, as usual, that he had his own way. The child had been very ill; but the fact was, although not yet five years old, he had got decidedly beyond his mother, and in the bottom of her heart she knew it well. Yet it was very easy to excuse her want of authority on the ground of his peculiarity.

There were times when patience failed and a whipping was attempted. But on such occasions Charley displayed such a strength of limbs and lungs, such a power of passion, as made her quite willing to remember, in such an extremity, that fortunate prescription, "not to excite him." The worst of this was, Charley himself knew quite enough to be able to avail himself of this excuse. He knew it as children know a great many things they cannot say, but can act. So when a point was to be gained, he had but to feign a fit of passion to scare his poor mother into consent. Very peculiar, however, was simply very obstinate.

This, however, is a fiction quite commonly entertained by incapable parents. They know in their secret thought, very well, that the trouble is one of the heart and not of the head. But if there were a real peculiarity of character or constitution, what a reason should it be for the most careful management and faithful restraint!

Charley's mother may see her melancholy likeness in the picture of a sad-faced woman, bowed with sorrow, who took her beautiful, blooming, and only daughter to the Insane Retreat, a confirmed lunatic.

"Oh, doctor!" sobbed the poor, distressed mother, "it is a very, very dark providence! If I could only trace it to something; but there never was a child more tenderly treated and indulged. Why, doctor, I never crossed her in her life!"

It would have been inhuman then to say so, but the doctor's involuntary decision was, "So, then, you have brought her here!"

There is a deplorable selfishness on the part of parents. The thing that is easiest for the parent, and not the thing best for the future man or woman, is the thing adopted. It is easier to indulge the teasing, restless boy, than to refuse or punish him. Alas, the poor children! They are brought without consent or wish of theirs into the world's turmoil and strife. Oh that there might be wisdom to guide them when brought here! Happily for us, our Father, who is neither unwise, selfish, nor indolent, can undo all mischiefs, and supply all failures.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE ASCENSION AND ITS EFFECTS.

A Sermon

Preached on Sunday Evening, June 2nd, 1862.

By the RIGHT REV. FREDERICK BARKER, D.D.,

(Metropolitan of Australasia.)

AT WEST STREET EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, ST. GILES', LONDON.

"So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.—MARK xvi. 19.

THE hidden source of the Christian's spiritual life is "with Christ in God." Of him he says, in the language of the Psalmist, "All my fresh springs are in Thee." It is to Him he looks as his treasure—his treasure is in heaven, hither also does he endeavour in heart and mind to ascend, he sets his affection on things above; he seeks those things which are at the right hand of God, with Christ, to be dispensed by Him, according to his promise.

Whatever, therefore, leads us to follow our Saviour Christ in thought, in faith, in prayer, and in desire, has a tendency to cultivate heavenly affections, and to cherish spiritual-mindedness, and thus to prepare us for His coming again.

May grace be given us, whilst we consider these words, so to hear and receive the truths conveyed in them, or which we may draw therefrom, that we also follow our Lord and Master, and for a time be with Him at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and learn how to draw fresh supplies of grace, mercy and peace, from God the Blessed Spirit, as from an overflowing fountain!

The words of the text are those of the Evangelist St. Mark's brief summary of that which is contained more at length in the commencement of the Acts of the Apostles, the narrative of our Lord's ascension. We, at this period of our ecclesiastical year, are called upon to consider this event. It does not concern us greatly to prove, or to believe, that it took place at this particular period. We may be grateful that our attention is, at this time, called to it, and that we are not permitted, through inadvertance, to omit the commemoration of that great fact, that great consummation of Christ's work, that He did ascend into the highest heaven. Observe

then, first, *The period at which He ascended*—after He had spoken unto the apostles. There is much of deep interest in that portion of the life of our blessed Lord, the interval between His resurrection and ascension. There is much mystery connected with the manner of that life—that He came with an interval of six days between His first and second appearing; that He met them now at Jerusalem, now in Galilee, by the sea of Tiberias.

The Evangelist St. Luke instructs us that, during that period, he was teaching his disciples in the things “concerning the kingdom of God.” (Acts i. 3.)

We know what he said to those who were assembled together; how He gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit, and authority connected therewith to “preach the gospel to every creature,” to go into the world, even as he had been sent by God the Father into the world. We know the charge also that he gave to Peter to “Feed His lambs, and to feed His sheep.” We read also, in the latter chapter of the Gospel of St. John, the instruction that He gave to His disciples previously to his entrance on the agon in the garden. We may suppose, then, that His instructions were of a similar character at the period in which He appeared to them during those forty days: that He spoke of the things which concerned the extension of His kingdom, and of the manner in which it was to be extended, that they be prepared for extending it, and men’s hearts for receiving it. We learn also from the question that the apostles asked, at the time, what would be the nature of their enquiries—“Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He bids them wait until they be endued with power from on high. Then, having taken them out to the Mount of Olives, beyond Bethany, He blessed them, and, whilst so doing, “He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” He thus ascended into heaven at the close of forty days, a period which often occurs in the sacred history; in the history of Moses and of Elijah, and in the commencement of our Lord’s in the temptation in the wilderness. When that period was completed, He ascended. He did not leave them until his prophetic work on earth was done. As upon the cross He exclaimed concerning the satisfaction He was to make for sin, “It is finished;” so now he blesses them as their prophet and teacher, and leaves them not till He has said all that is necessary for their instruction. And it is for our instruction also that this

should be observed. Man is immortal till his work is done, whatever God has for us to do in the world, He will keep us in being till it is accomplished. "It is finished," said our blessed Lord on the cross, and then "gave up the Ghost." John the Baptist fulfilled his course and then was beheaded. The apostle Paul for years laboured and then said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." So will it be with every one of the servants of Christ. Their work will be accomplished before they are summoned hence.

Surely, then, it may allay our anxiety, as to the time and manner of our departure, to consider that all this is arranged by heavenly wisdom. The work given us to do will be done by us, and then the voice will be heard, "Friend come up higher." Till that time we abide doing our Maker's will upon earth.

2. We observe, further, *Whence he was received.*

It was from the Mount of Olives, and there certainly seems significance in the fact. It had been, as it were, His habitation on earth. It was here that whilst the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, the son of man had where to lay His head ! It is remarked by the Evangelist St. John, that when, after some had conspired against His life, and one had spoken on his behalf, "all went to their own homes," Jesus went unto the mount of Olives ! It was there He held communion with his Heavenly Father, and thence He ascended to His heavenly home. It was there, also, He descended into the valley of humiliation ; there was situated that Garden where "Jesus was wont to resort," to hold communion with his heavenly Father ; there He "made supplication with strong crying and tears" in his last agony. It was from the depths of the Mount of Olives that that bitter cry was heard, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," and it was from this place He ascended into the highest heavens. From that place of communion with His Father—from that place of sorrow and deep suffering He went into the very presence of God.

And, my beloved brethren, it is often thus, even in this world ; from the bed of languishing, and of much weariness ; of suffering and of much pain ; from that couch of sickness whence the cry of distress, and the earnest prayer for succour, have arisen to the throne of grace, the soul has passed into the presence of God, and joined the

"Spirits of just men made perfect!" Thus, also, will it be at the resurrection. That body which has been "sown in weakness," shall be "raised in power." From the depths of this body's humiliation—"this vile body" as it is called—from the depths of earth or of ocean, where it lies in its humiliation, it shall arise to its glory, and be like unto Christ's own glorious body.

3. We observe further, *By whom he was received.*

He was received into heaven by the holy angels. They who testified of His birth, ascribing praise to Him, and to God for sending Him, they, too, were witnesses of His ascension, and testified to His apostles that He would "return in like manner." They were the forerunners and heralds of that heavenly host, of which we read in Psalm xxiv., who cried, when the question was asked, "Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory." He passed into the presence of Jehovah; into that place which, whatever its locality, is made by the presence of the body of Jesus, Heaven. He passed into that place where the innumerable company of the angels are; where the spirits of just men made perfect are; that place and state of which the Book of Revelation speaks when, in addition to the four-and-twenty elders, and the four living creatures, there is the company of the heavenly host, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, joining in ascribing praise to Him! If there be "joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth," surely there must have been joy when there entered into the Heaven of heavens One, by whose power and grace every redeemed sinner is brought into the knowledge and love of God! When there entered in that Saviour, who having finished the work that His Father had given him to do, now carried on his mediatorial office! Then, it may be said, the reign of grace was inaugurated, and another step made toward the consummation of all things; that glory which shall be seen when all "the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." He "sat at the right hand of God." He sat, for His work was finished. As the labouring man, at the close of the day, rests in his house, seated in the midst of his family, so He who had laboured on earth, a servant and a sufferer on behalf of His Church, and would not retire till His work was done, now enters into rest, and sits at the right hand of the Majesty on High. The apostle notes this in Hebrews x., as distinguishing the perfect

work of Christ from the imperfect work of the Jewish High Priest, who "*stood* daily (the very attitude in which he offered indicating the imperfection and the necessary repetition of his sacrifice) offering oftentimes the same sacrifice." But "this Man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat* down at the right hand of God." His work was accomplished; His toil was over; the reward is now to be reaped; He sits down in the midst of the family to enjoy of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.

There is one exception, indeed, to this description of His position in the narrative of the death of Stephen. It is interesting to observe that Stephen, in his dying hour, says he sees Jesus *standing* at the right hand of God. The apostle says concerning Him, that "Having suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted, or to run to their assistance (as the word signifies.) We may regard this attitude, not *sitting* but *standing*, as indicating that He was not as one indifferent to the agony of His martyred servant, but standing ready to help him in his sufferings, and to welcome him into that rest which he soon entered in answer to his prayer, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

He is at the right hand of God, according to that prophecy in Psalm cx. "The Lord said unto my lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The right hand of God is the seat of authority, dominion and power—as Joseph at the right hand of Pharoah was next to the king, none greater than he, save Pharoah—as the queen mother when Solomon wished to show her honor, was seated at his right hand—so Christ, entering into rest and glory, into that state of authority and supreme dominion which He at present possesses, is seated at the right hand of Him who, being a Spirit "hath neither body, parts, nor passions."—but he is so in this respect, that all power in heaven and earth is committed unto Him; that, in the universe, none is greater than He. He is the "Prince of the Kings of the earth, King of kings and Lord of lords."

4. We observe further *The purpose for which our blessed Lord ascended*. Generally He is there to carry on that work of which He spoke to His apostles, "I go to prepare a place for you;" comforting them in the prospect of his departure. He is there also to rule and order all things for that great end which will be evolved in due time, the manifestation of his own glory. Nothing is beyond

His power nor beneath his notice. He makes "all things to work together for good for those that love God, and are the called according to His purpose." All, whether in earth or heaven, in providence or grace, are subject to His will; and the great end for which He works is that His people may shew forth His glory, that, in the time of His coming again, there may be a manifestation of the glory of God in the person and reign of Christ, and He is ordering all things for this end. Thus for each individual amongst us this consolation is to be found, (every one who is in Christ here, that is to say) that he is engaged in preparing a place for him. In the universality of His dominion, not the least of His saints is forgotten, whilst the whole scheme of providence is subject to His control, the individual wants of the humblest of His followers are never overlooked. For each one then the place will be prepared; it will be a mansion—an abiding place. "Here we have no abiding city." We dwell but in a tabernacle, a tent, which can easily be taken down, and must soon be taken down; but we look for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." If this "our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." While "in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven"—to have that house which Christ is preparing, given unto us. And we know that, in due time, the desire shall be accomplished, and we who "have the first-fruits of the Spirit, shall be satisfied when we awake up in His likeness.

5. But, more particularly, our blessed Lord has entered into heaven that there *He may intercede for all those who come unto God by Him.*

"There is no man that liveth and sinneth not;" but "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins." Upon the satisfaction which He made for the sins of man, His advocacy is founded. He can plead our cause because He hath wrought all that is necessary for our redemption. He suffered all that man deserved to suffer; He did all that man had neglected to do, and now he has "entered into Heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us." "He hath not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself;" and there He has carried His own work, the satisfaction which He made for the sin of man; this He pleads, and thus presents to the Father every prayer which we offer,

perfumed, as it were, with the incense of His own intercession, and procures for it gracious acceptance and reply.

Well, therefore, may the apostle comfort those whom he addresses in Rom. viii. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." He lives to make intercession for us, and because He lives, we "shall live also."

6. But He is there also, that *He may send the Holy Spirit of God*. This was the purpose for which He tells His apostles He was to enter heaven, and leave His church on earth. "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."

This work of our blessed Lord is as needful now as in the days of the apostles; and His words are as true for us as they were for them. So long as man is, so long will it be necessary that divine power should be exerted on his heart to renew and sanctify it; so long as the carnal mind is, it is necessary that one should come and change that carnal mind into the spiritual, and convert its enmity into friendship. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." It is by the power of that Spirit by which at first in the creation God "moved upon the face of the waters," that the heart of man must be renewed; that that "natural mind" in which the darkness dwells, and that natural heart, in which every affection is diverted from its proper object, and which is confusion and chaos, must receive light and order. The Spirit of God must move thereon, to impart life, and to direct the affections toward their proper end, by "shedding abroad the love of God in the heart." Then, in truth, are "all things new," when "the Spirit is poured upon us from on high;" "the wilderness becomes a fruitful field." My beloved brethren, it must be thus for each of us. If there are any among you who mourn under a sense of your many transgressions, and desire to be relieved of that burden of sin; it is by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, that you must be led to such a knowledge of the Saviour, and faith in Him, that you may be enabled to cast the burden upon Him, and so be sustained.

If the love of God does not dwell in the heart of any amongst you, if there are any who have not hitherto found that to love God supremely is the highest happiness, as the greatest duty of

man ; then here also is your remedy :—" Seek, and ye shall find ; ask, and it shall be given you ;" for the father giveth not more willingly bread to his child than our Heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask it.

Do not stand disputing whether, with such powers as you possess, it is possible to ask. Christ does, as it were come, by the preacher in the ordinances of His house, and say, " Wilt thou be made whole ?" You are not to stand questioning whether it is possible for you to pray, but go down upon your knees, and endeavour to lift up your hearts to Him ; ask that that Holy Spirit, by whose power man was formed from the dust of the earth, and became a living soul, may be imparted to you, and may be a quickening Spirit in the conversion of your own soul.

This blessed Spirit is the true remedy for all the ills that afflict mankind.

We look on the heathen world and ask, " O, Lord, how long ?"—" until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." Nothing else can remove that darkness, and take away that enmity and opposition to Christ. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit this must be accomplished.

Then, let those who are the Lord's remembrancers continually cry, " Pour out thy Spirit upon us !" " Take not Thy Holy Spirit from us !" For ourselves, my dear brethren, let me again remind you, this is the true remedy for all the wants we feel, for the coldness of our hearts towards Him, for our many departures from His will, our many short-comings and turnings aside from Him. You wish to be kept in the right way ; then pray " let thy Spirit lead me into the land of uprightness." O, let us pray more for the presence of this blessed Spirit, that He may be in us a Spirit of peace and love, a Spirit of holy obedience, and of godly fear, and thus, abiding in us, give us the hope and comforting testimony that we belong to God ; that we may more and more know that we are His, and He is ours ; He our Father, and we His children by the Spirit. May He be poured upon you, my brethren, in rich abundance, for Jesus Christ's sake !

Sketches and Essays.

DOMESTIC DISCIPLINE.

BY J. A. JAMES.

A PARENT is invested by God with a degree of authority over his children, which he cannot neglect to use, without being guilty of trampling under foot the institutions of heaven. Every family is a community, the government of which is strictly despotic, though not tyrannical. Every father is a sovereign, though not an oppressor; he is a legislator, and not merely a counsellor: and his will is law, not merely advice. He is to command, to restrain, to correct; and children are required to obey: he is, if necessary, to threaten, to rebuke, to punish; and they are to submit with reverence. He is to decide what books shall be read, what companions invited, what engagements formed, and how time is to be spent. If he sees anything wrong, he is not to interpose merely with the timid, feeble, ineffectual protest of Eli, "Why do ye thus, my sons?" but with the firm, though mild prohibition. He must rule his own house: and by the whole of his conduct, make his children feel that obedience is his due and his demand.

The want of discipline, wherever it exists, is supplied by confusion and domestic anarchy. Every thing goes wrong in the absence of this. A gardener may sow the choicest seeds: but if he neglect to pluck up weeds, and prune wild luxuriances, he must not expect to see his flowers grow, or his garden flourish; and so a parent may deliver the best instructions; but if he do not, by discipline, eradicate evil tempers, correct bad habits, repress rank corruptions, nothing excellent can be looked for. He may be a good prophet, and a good priest, but if he be not also a good king, all else is vain. When once a man breaks his sceptre, or lends it to his children as a plaything, he may give up his hopes of success from a religious education.

I have seen the evil resulting from a want of discipline in innumerable families, both amongst my brethren in the ministry and others. Frightful instances of disorder and immorality are now

present to my mind, which I could almost wish to forget. The misfortune, in many families, is, that discipline is unsteady and capricious, sometimes carried even to tyranny itself, at others, relaxed into a total suspension of law ; so that the children are at one time trembling like slaves, at others revolting like rebels : at one time groaning beneath an iron yoke, at others rioting in a state of lawless liberty. This is a most mischievous system, and its effects are generally just what might be expected.

In some cases, discipline commences too late, in others it ceases too early. A father's magisterial office is nearly coeval with his parental relation. A child, as soon as he can reason, should be made to feel that obedience is due to parents ; for if he grow up to boyhood before he is subject to the mild rule of paternal authority, he will, very probably, like an untamed bullock, resist the yoke. On the other hand, as long as children continue beneath the parental roof, they are to be subject to the rules of domestic discipline. Many parents greatly err, in abdicating the throne in favour of a son or daughter, because the child is becoming a man or a woman. It is truly pitiable to see a boy or girl of fifteen, just returned from school, allowed to sow the seeds of revolt in the domestic community, and to act in opposition to parental authority, till the too compliant father gives the reins of government into filial hands, or else by his conduct declares his children to be in a state of independence. There need not be any contest for power : for where a child has been accustomed to obey, even from an infant, the yoke of obedience will generally be light and easy ; if not, and a rebellious temper should begin to show itself early, a judicious father should be on his guard, and suffer no encroachments on his prerogative, while, at the same time, the increased power of his authority, like the increased pressure of the atmosphere, should be felt without being seen, and this will make it irresistible.

Undue severity, in the other extreme, is as injurious as unlimited indulgence. If injudicious fondness has slain its tens of thousands, unnecessary harshness has destroyed its thousands. By an authority which cannot err, we are told that the cords of love are the bands of a man. There is a plastic power in love. The human mind is so constituted as to yield readily to the influence of kindness. Men are more easily led to their duty than driven to it : a child, says an eastern proverb, may lead the elephant by a single hair. You remember, and perhaps have often seen verified, the old apologue of

the Sun, the Wind, and the Traveller. Love seems so essential an element of the parental character, that there is something shockingly revolting, not only in a cruel, not only in an unkind, not only in a severe, but even in a cold-hearted father. Study the parental character as it is exhibited in that most exquisitely touching moral picture, the parable of the Prodigal Son. When a father governs entirely by cold, bare, uncovered authority; by mere commands, prohibitions, and threats; by frowns untempered with smiles; when the friend is never blended with the legislator, nor authority modified with love; when his conduct produces only a servile fear in the hearts of his children, instead of a generous affection; when he is served from a dread of the effects of disobedience, rather than from a sense of the pleasure of obedience; when he is rather dreaded in the family circle as a frowning spectre, than hailed as the guardian angel of its joys; when even accidents raise a storm, or faults produce a hurricane of passion in his bosom; when offenders are driven to equivocation or lying, with the hope of averting, by concealment, those severe corrections which disclosure always entails; when unnecessary interruptions are made to innocent enjoyments; when, in fact, nothing of the father, but everything of the tyrant is seen: can we expect religion to grow in such a soil as this? Yes, as rationally as we may look for the tenderest hot-house plant to thrive amidst the rigours of eternal frost.

It is useless for such a father to teach religion; he chills the soul of his pupils; he hardens their hearts against impression; he prepares them to rush with eager haste to their ruin as soon as they have thrown off the yoke of their bondage; and to employ their liberty, as affording the means of unbridled gratification. Like a company of African slaves, they are at first tortured by their thralldom, and by that very bondage trained up to convert their sudden emancipation into a means of destruction.

Let parents, then, in all their conduct, blend the lawgiver and the friend, temper authority with kindness, and realize in their measure that representation of Deity which Dr. Watts has given us, where he says,—

“Sweet majesty and awful love
Sit smiling on his brow.”

In short, let them so act, that their children shall be convinced that their law is holy, and their commandment is holy, and just, and good: and that to be so governed is to be blessed.

THE MOTHER'S GIFT—A BIBLE.

REMEMBER, love, who gave thee this,
 When other days shall come ;
 When she, who had thy earliest kiss,
 Sleeps in her narrow home.
 Remember, 'twas a mother gave
 The gift, to one she'd die to save.

That mother sought a pledge of love,
 The holiest, for her son ;
 And from the gifts of God above,
 She chose a goodly one ;
 She chose for her beloved boy,
 The source of light, and life, and joy.

She bade him keep the gift, that when
 The parting hour should come,
 They might have hope to meet again,
 In an eternal home.
 She said his faith in that would be
 Sweet incense to her memory.

And should the scoffer, in his pride,
 Laugh that fond faith to scorn,
 And bid him cast the pledge aside
 That he from youth had borne.
 She bade him pause and ask his breast,
 If he or she had loved him best.

A parent's blessing on her son
 Goes with this holy thing ;
 The love that would retain the one,
 Must to the other cling.
 Remember ! 'tis no idle toy,
 A mother's gift—*remember, boy!*

THE ROD.

"WELL, he is a spoiled child ; but the world will take up the rod against him, and make up for the want of early correction." So we heard one speak of a petted boy, and thought the remark only too true. We start in life full of faults and peculiarities, which have been amiable weaknesses in the eyes of the family circle ; but upon entering the career of mature life, we find we must change in almost every particular. This lesson is not learned in a day, and in

proportion as the will is unbroken, and the passions unchecked, so is the severity of the world's discipline. The youth of violent temper learns self-control, by finding that his business-standing and position in society depend on his improvement in this respect. He who has grown self-conceited in the midst of an admiring home circle, becomes humbled at the contempt and indifference of his fellow-men. Thus violent attachments become subdued, and exuberant enthusiasm cooled, by the rebuffs of a cold, calculating world. One fault after another is cured by the smarting of the world's rod, until a self-willed, headstrong youth is whipped into what he ought to be. Roughnesses of character become softened by constant attrition, so that he who has seen and felt the world, and been moulded by unbending circumstances, looks with pity on one just starting in life.

This process of improvement is much more observable with the Christian than with the worldly man. He is taught of God, and in proportion as he grows in grace, and gets near to heaven, so often will his situation become painful. He mourns his faults and deficiencies, and prays for strength to improve. His prayer cannot be answered without a series of circumstances which in regular succession effect the desired change of character. To the old Christian, the sight of one just starting in a heavenly life is full of sympathy and interest. He knows the young beginner must be held under the rod, and be smitten many times ere his fierce passions, strong will, self-sufficiency, and ambition change to the forbearance, long-suffering, and humility of the Gospel. The precious stone must be polished, and fitted for the Redeemer's crown. Nothing will be done to harm its value, or dim its lustre; and yet it may be roughly handled, and submitted to many a strange process ere the work is done. Who, in a mere worldly sense, would say, "Let me remain an ignorant, impolitic youth, unable to deal with men, and powerless to guide my affairs, rather than submit to the world's rude jostle?" Not one; all desire to know the world, and learn the way to success.

If such is the feeling of the worldling, how much more should the Christian bow to the heavenly Teacher who does not willingly afflict, but is full of loving kindness and tender mercy. It is a momentous step to decide for Christ against the world and Satan combined. But God will "with every temptation provide a way of

escape." "There is no royal road to learning," either in heavenly or earthly knowledge. Each Christian must walk in the narrow, beaten path of tribulation. Some will need more chastisement than others, but "all must be taught of God," to learn how to live or how to die. Submit, then, to the heavenly Teacher, and learn to look each adverse circumstance, each bitter disappointment, calmly in the face, as a lesson you peculiarly need, which must be learned, without which the soul may never see heaven. This view of life will brighten the sad hours of sickness and sorrow, and give the Christian a constant motive for contentment. To the true Christian, life's lessons are solemn, and often hard to learn, but yielding "the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

GOTTHOLD'S EMBLEMS.

THE MOTHER.

A MOTHER was one day playing with her darling, a little girl of about two years old. After half smothering the little one with kisses and caresses, she playfully said, "Shall mamma die now, and go away and leave her baby?" and with that, she lay back in her chair, put her hand before her eyes, and pretended to see and hear nothing. The poor child tried with all its tiny strength to remove her hand; but though she felt the warm touch of the soft baby fingers, she still pretended to be quite unconscious; and the poor little thing, deserted thus by her who used to listen to its lightest cry, began to weep bitterly. At its first cry of real distress, the mother started up, clasped it fondly in her arms, kissed and soothed away its little grief; and the tears of sorrow were soon exchanged for the joyous sound of merry childish laughter.

Gotthold sat by, and watched the mother and her child with peculiar interest. This, thought he, resembles in some respects the dealings of God with my soul. When outward and inward trials oppress me, and cares press heavily upon me—when I walk in darkness and have no light, when I can find no refuge, no help, no protection—it seems to my sorrowful heart as if God were gone away for ever, as if there were no more a refuge to be found in him. But before long I have experienced that in all this he was only trying me: he hid his face but to prove my faith, and love, and

trust in him—to make my prayers, and tears, and cries for help more true and earnest; and so to fill me with greater joy and purer delight when he once more lifted on me the light of his gracious countenance.

THE PRUDENT WIFE.

I REMEMBER, thought Gotthold (still thinking of the mother and her child), a story which I once heard of a prudent and pious wife, who, remarking one day that her husband was sorely troubled, and then perceiving that he did not sleep all night for sorrow, met him in the morning with a more mournful face than his own, weeping bitterly. Her husband was much surprised to see her in such deep grief, because only the day before she had spoken cheerfully to him; had entreated him to remember that excessive grief and anxiety were sinful, and had earnestly implored him to be more cheerful: he therefore asked her the reason of such unexpected and unlooked-for sorrow as hers. She hesitated for some time to reply, then, when he pressed her, she told him that she had had a singular dream. She had dreamt that an angel had appeared to her and had told her that God was dead, and that all the holy angels were weeping. "What a foolish fancy!" said her husband; "I wonder you can repeat it, or even think of it, for you know right well that God can never die."

"Well," replied his wife, "if it be so, if God can never die, why are you then so troubled and distressed? You seem in as deep grief as if we had no longer a kind Father in heaven, as if we had no longer a God who has promised to care for us—as if we had no longer an omnipotent Friend who can set bounds to our misfortunes, and can by a word turn sorrow into joy. My dear husband, I beseech you to trust in God, and to trust in Christ. Why should you fear or doubt, since God ever lives?—his arm is not shortened, that it cannot save; his ear is not heavy, that it cannot hear."

Truly, if our heavenly Father lived not, we could not, and we would not wish, to live one other hour. But though he hideth his face for a time, he sees us still; he watches over us still. Let us not cease to call upon him with strong crying and tears, till he again vouchsafes to us a token of his presence. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

INFANT TRAINING.

THOSE things which we dread seldom come. The weak and worn-out mother may be restored to active life, and find that instead of leaving her children behind her, it is herself who is to be left childless, to care for the orphans of others. Let the duty of the hour be all our care. If our little ones are to go first, the law which we have sought to frame for them from God's Word, shall, through his free love, be a means of making their journey safe, and its end blissful; or if we are to leave them, it shall still, with powerful charm and boundless influence, be the wall on the right hand and on the left, to keep them from the paths of the destroyer. Death, which breaks the chain of earthly influences, is oftentimes a leading link in the chain of the blessings of Christian parentage.

Self-denial is sometimes required not to press them beyond the point of childish simplicity, and to discourage every thing which would make them seem to be "wonderful children." "Let her play till she's seven," Professor Simpson had been heard to say of a delicate child, and Freddy and George used to repeat with great satisfaction, that till they were seven years old, they should not be obliged to learn anything but obedience: all the rest must be of choice. Neither ought we to desire to see in their emotional natures that kind of spiritual exercise which belongs to a later period. "Does your boy seem to love divine things?" we asked of an experienced continental pastor. "Yes; but I do not wish to see in him more than a child's religion." Often will a thinking child voluntarily cross the limits which we are accustomed to ascribe to his age, and bound into the wide territory of truth; but he will not linger there. A hidden spring sends him from the midst of his profoundest reverie into a game of romps, and he is conscious of no inconsistency: the tender intellect is fenced with this protecting power.

In prayer, above all, must the little one be left to speak as a child—bringing all its minute yet real interests, in its own language, before the eye that counts the hairs of the humblest head. It asks the God of nature to keep the seeds its little hand has sown, to send them rain and turn them into flowers. It asks the God of providence to give food to the little bird which flew in and out of the window in a snow-storm; and why not, since our heavenly Father feedeth

them," and clothes the lilies of the field. Freddy's nurse was one evening dictating his prayer to him, and used the expression, "Grant;" he looked up, saying, "Is 'grant' a beast with horns?" continuing quite gravely, and substituting a word he better understood. Again, when such expressions as these were dictated, "Give me grace and strength to obey thee in all things," he turned his head aside, and translated it thus, "Lord, teach me to do what's right." When reading to him the account of Elijah's parting with Elisha, we thought we had made it quite plain; but after having satisfied himself as to all the important parts of it, he asked, referring to the words, "and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground" — "What became of 'hither' and 'thither,' are you sure they weren't drowned?"—*From the Way Home.*

DEAL GENTLY WITH THE LITTLE ONES.

A LITTLE child, when asked why a certain tree grew crooked, replied: "Somebody trod upon it, I suppose, when it was little."

He who checks a child with terror,
Stops its play, and stills its song,
Not alone commits an error,
But a grievous moral wrong.

Give it play, and never fear it,
Active life is no defect;
Never, never break its spirit;
Curb it only to direct.

Would you stop the flowing river,
Thinking it would cease to flow?
Onward must it flow for ever;
Better teach it where to go.

COMFORT FOR BEREAVED PARENTS.—Some one has said of those who die young, that they are like the lambs which the Alpine shepherds bear in their arms to higher, greener pastures, that the flocks may follow.

ONE great mistake of life is looking to the clouds for happiness, instead of looking above them.—*Adam.*

THE LAW OF HOME.

It was a maxim of Mrs. Wesley, the mother of the eminent and useful man, "whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches," that she sought to have "only one will in her house, and that was the will of God." The law of home is the Word of God. When God gave His Word, he specified the close relation in which the family was to stand to Him, and throughout all its pages there is a domestic influence. Those mothers who have been early instructed in God's Word and filled with His Spirit, have earnestly sought to mould their homes and guide their children by the precepts of revelation. When God counselled His people of old in reference to family education, He uttered these words: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates." (Deut. vi. 4-9.) These expressions declare very plainly that *personal* piety was to be constantly associated with *family* piety, and the former was to appear in the latter. It is thus clearly the duty of every Christian mother to let her devotion to the Lord shine in the presence of her children, to let her knowledge of the Lord be her conversation with her children, that they may grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

 PROGRESS; OR, THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.*

THE contrast is strong and sharp as contrast can be, between things Divine and human. While everything connected with God is stable and steadfast, everything connected with man is changeable and uncertain. Our great dramatist says: "What a piece of workmanship is man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a God!" The International Exhibition is a representation on a colossal scale, and within the

* By W. Anderson.

walls of a single edifice, of man's power and capacity to mould the crude materials of nature into forms of grace and beauty, grandeur and elegance, utility, comfort, and convenience. Behold the arts and industry of the North and the South, of the East and the West, scattered or grouped around you, to be inspected in detail, or taken in at a glance. It makes one's heart beat with gratitude, to see how God thus endows our human family with skill, talent, and genius to make an inheritance of all things. Yet, alas! how fragile and delicate is the glory of man. Philosophers who have explained the mysteries of science, before death have been unable to comprehend the meaning of their own axioms. Poets of bright and ready wit, and fascinating accomplishments, have died lunatics. It is but a thin partition which frequently separates between the workings of genius and the eccentricities of an imbecile mind.

What scrambling, what straining do we see among men to obtain this world's good things! Search the hearts of all, from the soul of a Solomon on the throne, to that of a Lazarus at the gate, and you will find some lurking attachment to gold. The sea wafts our ships; ingenuity strives to outstrip time; the furnace blazes, the storehouse rises, the animal creation groans, and man is worked like a galley slave. Just that riches may be increased!

"This yellow slave
Doth knit or break religions, bless the accursed,
Makes the hoar leprosy adored,
——Puts odds
Between the roots of nations."

Now, need we say that wealth often suddenly passes away. Has not many a man lived to see the extravagant productions of his wealth melt like frostwork before the sun? Does history contain no accounts of millionaires buried among the ruins of their ambitious schemes? "Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things to enjoy."

Myriads of human beings are now eagerly gathering on our shores, and hastening to London, to witness the Great Exhibition. A few brief years, and all these animated, breathing forms from Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and the Islands of the Sea, shall be still and cold in death—mouldering in the silent grave. How very soon must all the sovereigns now reigning over the nations, all the

statesmen now occupying important and commanding positions, all the warriors renowned by their victories, all the men distinguished for learning and science, all the manufacturers now sending the products of their mechanical and constructive capacity from every part of the world to the metropolis, all the artisans and operatives now so emulous about their reputation, all the ministers of the gospel now preaching, and all the congregations now listening to them, be numbered with the dead! "One generation goeth, and another generation cometh," as wave following wave breaks upon the shore and disappears for ever.

There are three great sources of Progress—Creation, Providence, and the Bible. Each of these books is a species of revelation, and the third often appeals to the first and second. The data of all science exist in nature. In the material universe we discover the alphabet of those lessons which God seeks to impress upon his intelligent offspring. For six thousand years we have been studying the apocalypse of the earth and the heavens, and yet how vague and indefinite is our knowledge of the powers, properties, and glories of matter! We are still surrounded by bright and bewildering anomalies; important principles still remain undiscovered, at least in their great social applications. Providence, in a great measure, consists of God's carrying out and prolonging the plans and purposes of creation. "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions." In nothing is there chance; but in everything there is a God who—

"Overrules all mortal things,
And manages our mean affairs."

RAIN ; OR, NO RAIN.

IN the little parish of Yellowdale, farmers had long been without a minister. One day, the Rev. Mr. Seeley visited the village, and was asked to stay over Sunday, and preach to them. The people were pleased with his sermons, and some were anxious to have him stop. A meeting was called to know the mind of the parish.

"I don't see any use in having a minister," said Sharp, a rich old farmer; "a parson can't teach me anything. If we've any money

to spare, we'd better lay it out in something that will bring a fairer return."

The Sabbath-loving part of the people argued strongly against him.

"Well," answered Sharp, not choosing to show himself convinced, "I've heard tell of ministers that could pray for rain, and bring it. If we could hit on one of that sort, I'd go for hiring him."

Mr. Sharp was a man of consequence, and the younger and less knowing of his neighbours were quite taken with the idea.

"That would be a minister worth having," they thought.

And, after much talk, it was agreed to have Mr. Seeley upon this condition—that he would give them rain or fair weather when they wanted it; for their farms often suffered both from severe drought and heavy rains. Mr. Seeley was immediately waited upon by a committee of the parish, who soon came back, bringing the minister with them.

"I will accept your terms upon one condition," said he; "that you must agree upon what sort of weather you want."

This appeared reasonable, and matters were arranged for a year's stay at Yellowdale. Weeks passed on, bringing midsummer heats. For three successive weeks it had not rained, and the young corn was beginning to curl with drought. Now for the minister's promise.

"Come," said Sharp, with one or two others, whose hilly farms were suffering, "we need rain; you remember your promise?"

"Certainly," answered Mr. Seeley; "call a meeting."

A meeting was called.

"Now, my friends," said the pastor, "what is it you want?"

"Rain, rain!" shouted half-a-dozen voices.

"Very well; when will you have it?"

"This very night—all night long," said Sharp, to which several others assented.

"No, no; not to-night," cried Mr. Smith, "I've six or seven tons of well-made hay out."

"So have I," added Mr. Peck. "No rain to-night."

"Will you have it to-morrow?"

But it would take all to-morrow to get it in; and so objections came up for the two or three next days.

"In four days, then?" said Mr. Seeley.

"Yes," said Sharp; "all the hay will be in, and no more need be cut till——"

"Stop, stop!" cried Mrs. Sharp, pulling her husband smartly by the sleeve; that day we have set to go to Snow Hill. It mustn't rain then."

In short, the meeting resulted in just no conclusion at all.

"Until you make up your minds," said the pastor, on leaving, "we must all trust in the Lord."

The year rolled by, and the people could never all agree upon what kind of weather they wanted. Mr. Seeley, of course, had no occasion to fulfil his part of the contract, and the result was, that they began to open their eyes to the fact, that this would be a strange world if its inhabitants should govern it. They saw that nature's laws could be safely trusted in the hands of nature's God. At the close of the year, the clergyman spoke of leaving. This the people would not listen to.

"But I cannot stay under the old contract," said he.

"Nor do we want you to," said Sharp, much humbled, "only stay and teach us and our children how to know God, and obey the gospel."

"And all things above our proper sphere," added Mr. Seeley, "we will leave with God; for he doeth all things well."—*Old Jonathan.*

SUBMISSION.

Oh, it is easy in life's tranquil day,
When all around is peace, to kneel and pray—
"Father, thy will be done;" but when that will
Calls us to suffer, and be patient still;
When God's mysterious ways are all unknown,
When clouds and darkness veil his awful throne;
Oh! how we need his all-supporting hand,
To bow submissive to the high command!
To trust him still in life's beclouded day,
And in meek resignation thus to pray.

OUR HOME JEWELS.

No rood of land in all the earth,
 No ships upon the sea,
 Nor treasures rare, nor gems, nor gold,
 Do any keep for me :
 As yesterday I wrought for bread,
 So must I toil to-day ;
 Yet some are not so rich as I,
 Nor I so poor as they.

On yonder tree the sun-light falls,
 The robin's on the bough,
 Still I can hear a merrier note
 Than he is warbling now :
 He's but an Arab of the sky,
 And never lingers long ;
 But that o'erruns the livelong year
 With music and with song.

Come, gather round me, little ones,
 And as I sit me down,
 With shouts of laughter, on me place
 A mimic regal crown.
 Say, childless king, would I accept
 Your armies and domain,
 Or e'en your crown, and never feel
 These tiny hands again ?

There's more of honour in their touch
 And blessing unto me,
 Than kingdom unto kingdom joined,
 Or navies on the sea.
 So greater gifts to me are brought,
 Than Sheba's Queen did bring
 To him, who, at Jerusalem,
 Was born to be a king.

Look at my crown, and then at yours,
Look in my heart and thine;
How do our jewels now compare—
The earthly and divine?
Hold up your diamonds to the light,
Emerald and amethyst;
They've nothing to those love-lit eyes,
These lips so often kissed!

O! noblest Roman of them all,
That mother good and wise,
Who pointed to her little ones,
The jewels of her eyes.
Four sparkle in my own, to-day,
Two deck a sinless brow:
How grow my riches at the thought
Of those in glory now!

And yet no rood of all the earth,
No ships upon the sea,
No treasures rare, nor gold, nor gems,
Are safely kept for me;
Yet I am rich—myself a king!
And here is my domain;
Which only God shall take away,
To give me back again!

HAPPY FAMILIES.—Seek to have God with you in your daily walk; get him into your families, and there keep him. What a happy sight to see parents ruling at the head of the family in the fear of God, and how delightful to see the children brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If I want a good servant, I will aim to improve his mind; I will teach him what is proper; I will aim to be a good master: and then, I have no doubt, we shall be very happy together. I wish it were well understood that all duties are to be reciprocal. Let there be good parents, and we shall find good children; let there be good masters, and we shall have good servants.—*Rowland Hill.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

Valedictory Sermon,

Preached on Sunday Evening, July 6th, 1862,

BY THE REV. J. W. RICHARDSON,

AT TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD CHAPEL.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."—ACTS xx. 32.

CONTRARY to the Apostle's usual course, he had remained in Ephesus and given himself to the ministry of the word there, for three years. What reminiscences of those years of labor existed. With what self-denial and untiring earnestness had he toiled. With what confidence he appeals to those labors now—"I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God—I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." While his record was on high it was also in the consciences of men. Many think lightly of the labors of the devoted minister of the gospel, but there is great importance attaching to them. "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life." Hence while other labours may be unduly appreciated, these can scarcely be too highly valued.

When the Apostle had fulfilled his mission at Ephesus, he sent and called for the elders of the Church, and delivered to them a valedictory address. And in closing nearly twenty years of labor among you here, I gather you this evening for the purpose of delivering to you a few parting words. The text supplies me with an appropriate theme. I propose to direct your attention to—The Apostle's affectionate desire, and the efficient mode in which he sought its fulfilment.

1. The Apostle's affectionate desire.

The Apostle's intelligence and large heartedness, are constantly apparent in his communications to the Churches, but they appear most strikingly in his wishes and prayers for the brethren. Some of the grandest thoughts are uttered, and the most glowing and tender affection is indicated in these outpourings of his soul. Great as is the power which the apostle exercises over us in the revelation of truth which eye had never seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, he specially melts and moves us by his fervent wishes, and his loving prayers. Take the following examples—"For God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment. That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere without offence, till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God." Philippians i. 8—11. "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to

The Family Preacher. August, 1862.

desire that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." Colossians i. 9—11.

And in the text, he desires that they may be built up, and have inheritance among the sanctified.

1. The Apostle desires that the brethren might be built up.

The language is figurative, and denotes the erection of an edifice. There are two figures which the Apostle frequently employs in reference to Christians—a building and a body. These are used by him to denote individual advancement and church increase. When he employs the architectural figure in the text, it must be regarded as denoting both individual advancement and church increase.

(1). Individual advancement.

To be built up implies development—growth. Christianity is life. You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. But Christianity is new life. It is being born again—deeds, words, thoughts, joys, sorrows, hopes, and fears, all new; so much so, that the subject of them is said to be a new creature, created anew in Christ Jesus. This life is the life of God and of Christ in the soul. Hence, every one who begins to live to God is conscious of that which is new, in the tendency of his voluntary thoughts—in his emotions—in his practical purposes; yea, in the whole interior of that world of his human consciousness. Now this principle of life is distinctly recognised by the Apostle, when he speaks of Christians under the figures even of stones and of temples. He designates them living stones, and living temples. Hence, he represents them as growing. If they are babes, they are to grow; if stones or temples, they are to be built up—completed.

What is dead, obviously cannot grow. Life is necessary to growth. Until a man is born again, he is destitute of spiritual life, and therefore incapable of spiritual growth, but when regenerated, he begins to grow. That is a starting point of progress.

But growth, development, progress, not only implies life, but also imperfection. Christians, when first regenerated, are made alive, but the pulsations of life within them are exceedingly feeble. They need to grow. They are not at once made perfect. Their emblem is not Adam proceeding from the hand of God, in all the completeness of manhood, it is the babe. They are not youths even, just approaching manhood, but new-born babes. They have entered on their course, but only entered. Even in the case of those who have advanced farthest, what is behind is as nothing in comparison with what is before them. Even this Apostle says;—"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

While all this, however, is obviously implied in the ideas of life and growth, it is as really denoted by the figure of an edifice being built up.

While Christians, in this point of view, are represented as stones, yet they are living stones. By coming to Jesus, the living stone, they have become living

stones. Quickened by contact with the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is a quickening spirit, they are appropriate materials for God's great spiritual temple. Each believer, however, is a temple—a shrine for the Holy Ghost to dwell in. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" But while each converted person is a temple consecrated to the Lord, yet he is not a completed, perfected temple, but is being built up. The Apostle places this before us in a luminous and most impressive manner in his epistle to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. iii. 11: "For other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

"Other foundation can no man lay," as the inward basis of holy personal character, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. The faith which accepts a personal redeemer, and a personal redemption, is the support and ground-work of Christian excellence. That excellence, however, is reared—built up—by great labor, and slow degrees. Let every man, therefore, take heed, how he buildeth, after what mode, and with what materials. The aims and purposes, the motives and ends which influence the soul—the walk and conversation, the practical habits that appear in the life—all that properly constitutes character, the character of the inward and outer man, this is the edifice to be built up. Now this is what the Apostle in one place calls "growing in grace, and in the knowledge and love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," and in another place, "adding to faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity." In this last passage, the Apostle presents a full view of the edifice, which every individual Christian, as a wise, diligent, and honest workman, is to build upon the foundation of his faith. "It is wonderfully comprehensive, and exquisitely beautiful—this enumeration of virtues—this catalogue of the materials, which, being put together according to rule, shall stand forth, a noble, symmetrical, divine thing, so to speak, that shall seem a fitting abode for a heavenly inhabitant, the becoming embodiment of a divine life. The series, you will observe, begins with faith, and ends with love; it thus touches, at one extremity, all that is revealed of God and the infinite, and on the other, all that belongs to the world and man, while between the two, are placed in their order, whatever can be required for practical goodness—for the various utterances of a manifold virtue—for the personal and the relative, the active and the passive, the divine and the human. These, then, are the gold, and silver, and precious stones, with which Christians are to construct what they build on their faith, in the form of character." This is, to "increase with the increase of God"—"to grow up into the measure, of the stature of the fulness of Christ"—being built up—perfected. It is life in its maturity and power—the manhood of Christianity.

True religion is not the speciality of any one feeling, but the harmony of the whole of them. It is the whole soul marching heavenward, to the music of joy and love, with well-ranked faculties, every one of them beating time and keeping tune. True religion is thoughtful, but thought is not alone its nature. It is full of affection, but it has more than mere feeling; it abounds in grand, moral impulses. It is the soul of a man made wondrously rich, moving to the touch of

divine influence, in every way to which, such a creature as man can move. "There is no end to its combinations. It shapes itself beyond all enumeration of shapes. It thinks in vast and fathomless streams. It wills with all attitudes of authority and decision. It feels with all moods and variations of social affection. It rises by the wings of faith into the invisible, and fashions for itself a life there, glowing with every imaginable ecstasy, and no one of these is more religion than another. It is the whole soul's life that is religion." But to be built up is for individual piety to be deepened and strengthened, and mightily increased; knowledge to be clearer and more enlarged; purity more spotless and comprehensive; faith soaring into full assurance; love more fervid and assimilating; "peace like a river, and righteousness as the waves of the sea"—"joy unspeakable and full of glory." This the Apostle desired for these brethren, when he wished that they might be built up, and all this I earnestly desire for you, dear brethren.

(2). The Apostle desires church increase as well as individual advancement. When the Apostle Peter wrote to the brethren, he spoke of their being "built up a spiritual house." Christians are not only honored and happy as individuals, but they are formed into a holy, honorable, and blessed fellowship. In consequence of their common connexion with Christ, they sustain a mutual relation to each other, and form one living, spiritual temple. They are members of the one church in heaven and on earth, in which Christ celebrated his Father's praise, and in this relation they are to be regarded as built up, or increased. While individual Christians are temples of God, yet, in their collective character, they constitute one vast temple for the "habitation of God, through the Spirit." The Apostle frequently presents the idea of this grand temple rising up in the midst of the world. Individual Christians are living stones in this magnificent living temple, and each successive convert to the faith of Jesus is another stone for the building up of this glorious edifice. The stones of this edifice are not thrown together without choice or order, but they adhere with a happy and unchanging union: they are built together. This structure is in process of growth. It is not finished; the cope stone has not been placed upon it; yet, in its present immature state, its beauty of outline, and graceful form and proportions are apparent. Vast augmentations may be certainly anticipated. It shall enlarge and fill the world. But while individual Christians build up the one great temple of the living God, the Churches of the saints being increased and multiplied, tend to the completion of the hallowed structure, hence, the Apostle desired church increase when he wished that the brethren might be built up. So, brethren, I desire that you, as a church here, may be increased with men, as a flock; as the holy flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts. The Lord increase you a thousand-fold: may you be built up.

2. The Apostle desires that the brethren might have an inheritance among the sanctified.

Great and precious as are the privileges and blessings conferred upon believers, when introduced to a state of grace, they are all merely preliminary and preparatory to something more blessed and glorious. Then they become children of God, "and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." "Beloved now," says the Apostle, "we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." But even now, we are "begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible,

undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us." This inheritance is obviously celestial blessedness—the perfected salvation "ready to be revealed in the last time." To this the Apostle was accustomed to direct the attention of the brethren, in the form of consolation and of incentive. Hence he now exclaims "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." And again, "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And further, "If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him and be glorified together." There were times when the Apostle felt the special inspiration of the glory that awaited himself, and exulted in the thought of a community of interest in connexion with Christ. Hence he exclaims, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." And here you observe the community of interest and inheritance, as he pours forth his tender and most affectionate desire that these brethren might have inheritance among the sanctified. This inheritance is presented as enjoyed by the community of saints. It is "the inheritance of saints in light." Heaven is a reign of light. The radiance of Him who is light, streams throughout, and envelops all the children of light who live and walk in its lustre. They are the sanctified who possess this inheritance. Their sanctification is complete. No taint of sin remains, no trace of previous corruption can be discerned. None but saints can occupy the inheritance.

"An unregenerate spirit would feel itself so solitary and so unhappy, especially as it saw its hideousness mirrored in that sea of glass, which sleeps before the throne, that it would rather plunge for relief into the gloom of hell, and there for a moment feel itself at ease amongst others so like itself in punishment and crime." But the one inheritance is shared by many participants, and they who are to enjoy it are made meet for social intercourse. Selfishness vanishes before universal love, the intense yearnings of a spiritual brotherhood are developed and perfected, for the entire heirs of this inheritance, are as closely united, as if only one heart thrilled in their bosom, while one song bursts from their lips. Now it was on this community of blessedness and glory in the inheritance of heaven that the Apostle dwelled, and the thought stirred and prompted him when writing to the Thessalonians, he said, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming." So here his heart's desire for these brethren is, that they might enter upon the inheritance of glory with all the sanctified.

Now this wish and hope of the Apostle I cordially and earnestly express for you. My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may have inheritance among the sanctified. I would that we should lovingly regard ourselves as heirs together of this inheritance. We remember many who had fellowship with us here, who have been translated to the inheritance of heaven. We think of them as having received the crown, the throne, and the kingdom. May God grant to you all "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

II. The efficient mode in which the Apostle sought the fulfilment of his desire.

Wishes frequently are vain and powerless, because they are impracticable. Moreover, they frequently fail of their fulfilment, either from a lack of means, or the employment of most inappropriate ones. Now the Apostle adopted the wisest and the best means. He committed these brethren to God. He betook himself to prayer on their behalf, "And the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

1. He commended them to God.

All grace and blessing comes from God. He preserves saints to his everlasting kingdom. They are kept amidst the many dangers to which they are exposed, by God. The peace of God keeps their hearts and minds, inasmuch as it produces the spiritual illumination of the understanding, the hallowed repose of the affections on their proper objects, and the perfect acquiescence of the will in the appointments

and acts of infinite wisdom. But they are "kept by the power of God." This implies weakness and defencelessness on the part of saints. The necessity for divine protection is distinctly implied in the prayer of Christ for his disciples—"Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." The Apostle, like the Saviour, committed these brethren to God. He knew that his loftiest thought, and largest and most intense desire, were infinitely surpassed by the power of God. Many, he was aware, were the wants and weaknesses, perils and sorrows of the saints, and but for divine aid they would fall short of the inheritance, hence he commended them to God.

So, dear brethren, would I commit you to God. My prayer for you is, that He may preserve you "blameless to His everlasting kingdom." As your day may your strength be. May the grace of Jesus be sufficient for you. "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think."

2. The Apostle commended them to the word of God's grace.

The Apostle Peter says that saints are "kept by the power of God, through faith." Most probably he refers to the power of God as exercised in reference to the enemies of the Christian, controlling their malignant purposes, and as exercised in the form of spiritual influence on the mind of the Christian himself, keeping him in the faith of the truth, in the love of God, and in the patient waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ. It is through the persevering faith of the truth that the Christian is, by divine influence, preserved from falling, and kept in possession of that state and character which are absolutely necessary to the enjoyment of the heavenly inheritance. God does not keep his people, however, in a state of negligence and inactivity, but in the strenuous use of all their powers, and in the diligent improvement of all their religious advantages. The Apostle knew that God keeps his people through the use of means, hence he committed them to the word of God's grace. This is a beautiful designation of the gospel. It is "the gospel of the grace of God." The faith of the Christian must rest upon testimony. Truth is the basis upon which faith rests. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. Purifying their hearts by faith." How often and how earnestly does the Apostle exhort Christians to be rooted, grounded, and settled in the truth, and to have "the word of Christ dwelling in them, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." How precious to the Apostle was the word of grace. So dear that life itself was valued only for the sake of testifying the glad tidings of the grace of God. To God and his word, therefore, the Apostle commits the Church, while some, alas, commit the Church to the church, omitting the Scriptures, which they study to exclude, but God, who has "magnified his word above all his name," has committed his Church to it, as the instrument for building it up to perfection. I then, dear brethren, commit you to the word of God's grace. "Blessed is the man who delights in the law of the Lord." Believe it firmly, and practise it constantly. Take it as "the light of your feet, and the lamp of your path." There is great danger amidst the abounding literature of the day, and the external activities of the times, of your depreciating and neglecting the word of grace. "This law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, this testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, these statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart, this commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Desire, then, "the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." Be not satisfied with a superficial acquaintance with the gospel, but seek to comprehend with all saints, its height, and depth, and length, and breadth, and "leaving the principles, the elements of the doctrine of Christ, go on to perfection." Then will you be "like trees planted by the rivers of water, you shall bring forth fruit in season, your leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever you do shall prosper."

"Now, dear brethren, most affectionately I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

But I am reminded here, that the Apostle was about to leave the brethren to whom he addressed these words, and I also am about to leave you. Nearly twenty years ago I received a most cordial invitation, not only from the managers, but also from

the churches and congregations of both the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Chapel, to become co-pastor with my dear friend Dr. Campbell, with whom I continued to alternate services, in uninterrupted harmony, for upwards of six years. Since that time, for more than thirteen years, I have been the sole pastor of Tottenham Court Chapel. During the whole period of my pastorate, this Chapel has been burdened with an oppressive debt, which has in no small degree impeded our prosperity. Ten thousand pounds was a burden too heavy to bear. Moreover, there were added to this, the trammels and difficulties of a Chancery Award, with which the Chapel was encumbered when the trusts were declared many years ago. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, however, much has been effected. During the last six years, about Four Thousand Pounds have been raised, by which an arrangement was effected, for the removal of a large portion of the debt. And here I am bound to bear testimony to a liberality of the most enlarged and spontaneous character. To your power, yea and beyond your power, many of you contributed. Still I felt that whatever might be the relief gained from pecuniary pressure, so long as the Church and Congregation and Pastor were bound by the legal provisions of the Award, liberty and real prosperity could not be enjoyed. My friend Dr. Campbell had partially succeeded in securing a more liberal constitution for the people, and I felt that to perfect that which had been begun, would be a high and honourable achievement. Difficulties and perils, enough to deter, crowded the way, and sometimes I was ready to halt, but by God's help, I was enabled to persevere, and the most perfect success has crowned my effort. This time-honored place of worship is now free from all those legal impositions by which we have so long been limited and restrained.

And now the question is pressed upon me by yourselves and others, Why, after so much sacrifice and toil, and such a perfect success, should you retire? My reply is, that after long and prayerful consideration of the subject, I have arrived at the conclusion that my mission is ended, my work is done here. The London Congregational Chapel Building Society, which has proved the instrument of my success, can now, I apprehend, more efficiently take up the cause, and carry it forward to a prosperous issue. Success of the highest kind, with the blessing of God, is certain.

And now, dear brethren, I say farewell. We must separate. I shall not forget the deep feeling that was manifested in our church meeting when I intimated my intention to leave you. Those tears, and that profound silence indicated your affectionate regard. But in separating, it is grateful to remember, that we part, not because of contention and strife. I go, not because you wish me to leave, for loving hearts say stay. I depart, not because I am driven away by unkindness, but because of my deep conviction that it will be better on the whole, that I should give place to another, who may have a fairer field, and stronger probabilities of success than I could calculate upon. In another sphere of labor, there may be less of difficulty than might encompass me here.

Precious to me will be the memory of the past. You know that God has not permitted me to labor in vain among you. Many now in heaven were brought to Jesus through my instrumentality here, and many now among you recognise me as the minister of salvation to them.

How often amidst much to depress has my heart been gladdened by communications from those who have received spiritual good in this sanctuary. One great privilege I have often felt it to be, to minister in the metropolis, that so many strangers are brought under the sound of the preacher's voice, and his influence for good is thus greatly extended. Frequently have I had letters of thanks from persons at a distance, who have found blessing here. Only the other day, a note was addressed to me by a lady, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, unknown to me, who says:—"Welcomed three weeks in the neighbourhood, and besides the old and interesting associations connected with the past history of Whitfield's Chapel, we have remembrances of profitable lessons of instruction to carry from it, for which we feel thankful to God." Last week, a young man, who was received to fellowship with us, but has removed to a distant part of the country, writing to me respecting his dismissal, says:—"Dear Sir, I often remember you with gratitude. I know that God blessed your labours to my soul."

During these years, a large number have been received to the fellowship of the church. Day Schools and Sunday Schools have been in vigorous operation, while Christian Instruction, Dorcas, and Lying-in Societies have been efficiently sustained, and a City Missionary partially supported. This sanctuary has thus proved a light, and a well of living water to the neighbourhood, while Home, Colonial, Irish, and Foreign missions have received support. For all this I thank God.

But precious to me will be the memory of fast and faithful friends here. What kindness have I received. Welcomed ever to your homes, and hailed in all your assemblies with hearty good-will. I give God thanks for all the peace and happiness we have had in fellowship together. Be assured, I shall not cease to love and pray for you. May "peace be within these walls, and prosperity within this palace: for my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee."

In conclusion, let me remark :—

1. We separate from each other, but we cannot be separated from the past. That past is a fact. It still lives. Twenty years in any connexion is important, but specially so in that of pastor and people. What momentous interests it involves. What truths proclaimed, what admonitions, warnings, and invitations addressed. What responsibility it includes.

When I commenced my stated ministry among you, my first text was, "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other, the savour of life unto life." Blessed has the past been to some among you. Some that were afar off have been brought nigh; some that had not obtained mercy have obtained mercy; some that were not a people have become the people of the Lord.

But there are some of you yet unconverted. You have not received the light, and are therefore in darkness. You have not received salvation, and are therefore condemned. You are away from Christ, without hope. Is not the memory of the past solemn to you? You have turned a deaf ear to counsel and reproof. By the tenderness and love of Jesus I have entreated you; by the inconceivable value of your immortal souls I have exhorted you, and yet you are unsaved. Shall I leave you in this sad condition? May this last appeal effectually arouse and impress you. O, now repent, now believe, and live.

2. We separate—but there will be a future. What will that future be? To a large extent, it will be what we shall make it. The past and the present bear upon the future. We are receiving form and character from the times that are passing over us. The gift of Pastors, Sabbaths, and the Gospel will be identified with our future. Our eternity will turn upon what we are in time. We separate, but we must meet again. We must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ. Pastor and people must meet there. Each must render account. O to do it with joy, and not with grief. How fearful for a Pastor to become a witness against any of his people in that day.

Christians, seek a loftier piety. Whatever may be the elevation you have reached, rise higher; press forward. You that have been zealously occupied in works and labors of love, be instant in season, and out of season. You that have been lukewarm and worldly in the profession of truth, awake, arise, and stand up from the dead. Let your future be one of light and brightness. And you who have refused Christ, now embrace him, that your future here may be one of purity and peace, and hereafter, one of glory, honor, immortality, even eternal life. O let us all, dear brethren, strive by God's grace for a glorious future in the Kingdom of our Lord above. And now, carry away with you, this valedictory word—"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs; that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Sketches and Essays.

THE LOST CHILD.

"You will maybe be stepping down to the fair to-day, Mrs. Ingleby?" asked a smart young cottage mother of a quiet elderly woman, who had entered her house to beg the loan of a pan.

"Nay, not I," replied the visitor. "Many's the fair I have been to when I was young, and I can't say as how I ever got any good or satisfaction there. And further than that, neighbour," she added more seriously, "it's my opinion that them fairs is bad places, as well as unprofitable ones. Folks say they go to see their acquaintances from the country, and maybe that is the beginning of their business; but one is next tempted to see the shows, and have one's fortune told, and take a dance in the dancing-booths; and so one wastes a deal of money, and hears no end of foolish vanity and wicked oaths. Before my girls went out to place, I never allowed them to go nigh-hand a fair, and I hope now they never will."

Now, all this time the resolution was strong in Mrs. Dickson's heart to go to the fair; but she had not the courage to say so to Mrs. Ingleby, for whom she had a great respect, not to say awe. So she made no reply to her sentiments, only begging her to keep the pan as long as ever she liked.

As soon as her husband had taken his dinner, and gone back to his work, Mrs. Dickson called her little daughter Ellen, and bade her take great care of Charlie; and then she hastened to array herself in her best clothes.

Ellen was nine years old, and Charlie only four. The elder child went to the Sabbath-school, and had learned how that God's eye is ever watchful, ever present. The fair had been spoken of on the last Sabbath, and Ellen's teacher had cautioned her not to go there. A little friend who was in the same class had made an agreement with Ellen to go together to a wood very near their village, and gather sticks to make a bonfire such as the boys had made on the fifth of November, instead of going to the fair. Poor Ellen was therefore rather perplexed when her mother committed Charlie to her care for the whole afternoon.

Presently, a neighbour called to invite Mrs. Dickson to bear her company, as she was also bound for the fair. She asked why the children might not go. "To be sure," she said, "hers were bigger lasses than Ellen, but they had been away to the fair ever so early in the morning."

Little Ellen hesitated. "I don't want to go to the fair, thank you," she said, timidly. "My teacher told me that people often say and do things that grieve the Lord Jesus at fairs, and no one learns to please Him there. And she says that one hears bad words there, and maybe sees rudeness which makes us unhappy in our minds afterwards."

Ellen blushed very much at her own temerity in venturing to say so much, and their visitor looked a good deal annoyed.

"Never in my life did I hear such a fuss about nothing," she said, scornfully. "It's a pity, Nelly, that you are not a lad, or they would make a preacher of you! But if you are too religious to like seeing a wild-beast show, or a few juggling tricks, or to take a ride in a merry-go-round, well, I think you are too righteous by half!"

"Oh, mother!" exclaimed little Charlie, "do take me to the fair, I should so like to ride as Mrs. Jones says. I'll walk as bold as a man, mother, and never ask you to carry me, if I may only go."

"No, no, Charlie, my lad," replied his mother, "you shall go next Martinmas to the fair. It's over a long way for you now that you are such a little one."

"I'll be quite big next year, won't I, mother?"

"Yes, honey. And I will bring you a ginger-bread lion and a penny trumpet for fairings." Charlie seemed quite content, and followed Ellen into the village road, whither she had stolen under the smart of Mrs. Jones's rebuff.

Although late in November, the weather was close and warm, and the clouds seemed suspended close to the tree tops. The roads were very wet, and little Charlie had soon forgotten the fair in the delight of making a mud pie. The village was nearly deserted, for most of the women had gone to the fair in the neighbouring town, and taken their children with them.

Soon Ellen's friends joined her, and they began to consult about their plan. The wood was so very wet that Ellen dared not take Charlie there, as the child was apt to catch cold easily; but she thought, as he was so well amused with his mud pie, that they

might run quickly and get their sticks, and be back before he missed them.

Accordingly they hastened away, and soon reaching the wood began diligently to collect the fallen branches. Ere they had gone far, they were surprised to find some blackberries still lingering among the entangled underwood, and they eagerly gathered them. Ellen most generously saved the best of her share for Charlie, and they forgot the first object of their search in their new pursuit.

A considerable time passed away while they were thus engaged ; and when Ellen began to wonder anxiously whether Charlie would be fretting, Agnes assured her that he could not yet have missed them, they had been such a little time gone.

But Ellen insisted on returning, and they were really astonished on retracing their steps, to see how far they had wandered.

On regaining the village road, they found Charlie's dirt pie, but the child himself was gone. Ellen hastened to the cottage to seek him there. But the cottage was empty.

The children were quite at fault ; they knew not where to search. They went to the fields, where Charlie had been accustomed to gather daisies and buttercups in the spring ; they went to the cottages where his playfellows lived, but these were locked up, for all the inhabitants were off to the fair.

* * * * *

From what could be ascertained, the following is about poor Charlie's last night's history.

When the two girls went away to the wood, Charlie found himself alone. He had not seen which way they went, so he ran to seek them in an opposite direction. Making the best use of his stout little legs, he hurried at full speed along the lane, until he came to the handsome bridge which crossed the river on the road to the town. He had been that way two or three times, and it suddenly flashed upon his mind that he could join his mother at the longed-for fair!

He redoubled his efforts, and, determined not to be tired, he steadily plodded on towards the town. The road was long, but the child felt so manly and so proud of his independence, that he reached the fair without being sensible of any great fatigue.

But how to find his mother !

He asked several persons for her, but all were pre-occupied. They were talking to friends, and gave no heed to the child's weak plea.

A band was playing before a kind of theatre in the centre of the handsome market-place ; drums were rolling to announce the readiness of the wild beasts to receive visitors ; a man was shouting in front of a caravan—

“ Walk up, walk up, come and see

A horse's head where his heels should be !”

Several merry-go-rounds were whirling, with all the bells ringing ; and the crowd was singing, talking, and laughing on every side. The poor child felt bewildered and dizzy ; he caught at the dress of a passer-by to save himself from falling, but she roughly disengaged her gown and hurried away. In vain he cried and called upon his mother ; no eye pitied, nor even so much as noticed him. Miserably he crawled along, sobbing and terrified ; he knew not whither he went ; to get away was all he had power to strive for. He pushed his way still ; twice he fell down, and got up again, still sobbing, still struggling forward. The crowd had become less dense, the noise less deafening ; he was entering a street leading from the market-place. Soon he found the pavement pretty clear, and pushed his way forward. Emerging into the country again, his terrors gave way, his fears lulled ; he was going home.

But oh, what a weary way it was to return ! The poor little legs ached terribly ; heavy rain was now falling, and it embarrassed the child, and prevented him seeing far before him. Oh that he could reach the bridge ! then he would feel himself near home !

He was worn and weary, and he sat down on the road-side, and began to cry again.

Some young men and girls came laughingly along. “ What are you blubbering for, my lad ?” asked one of them in rough kindness ; “ get up, and go your way home !”

“ I can't find my home,” sobbed the child.

“ What do they call you, honey, and where do you live ?”

“ They call me Charlie Dickson, and I live at Hewick.”

“ Hewick ! You're on the wrong road for that, my man. Turn about, and take the first road on this hand, and ask everybody you meet to tell you your way.”

The girl turned the child's face the right way, showed him the hand he was to follow, and felt that she had fully done her duty to him. The poor little wanderer retraced his footsteps wearily. He stumbled continually, and often fell, for the path was very slippery

with the wet ; but he took the right turn, and toiled slowly forward. The short winter's day was fast closing in, and the coming darkness terrified the child still more than his former troubles had done ; and he re-commenced his bitter cry, while he still stumbled on. Emerging from the lane into the high-road, he knew not whether to turn to the right or the left, and unhappily chose the latter. The drenching rain fell heavily, the tears blinded his eyes, his strength was fast failing him, and the sight of a woman carrying a child passing along the road, made him call out again despairingly for his own mother. He began to run after the woman, hoping to attract her attention, but her rapid steps had already borne her out of hearing. But little light remained now by which poor Charlie could choose his way.

On the opposite side of the road a gate swung to and fro, moved by the fitful wind. Its creaking attracted the poor child's notice. A bright hope flashed on his mind ; surely it was the gate leading into a field at the back of his father's cottage, and there was a gap in the hedge, through which he could creep into their own little garden ! Summoning all his remaining strength, he ran across the road, and through the gate. It was too dark to see many paces before him, and the exhausted child pressed on in hope. He sought the gap in the hedge and the light in the cottage in vain ; but there was another gate, and he went through that. Dark as it was, he could discern some trees before him, and a rushing noise was in his ears. He knew that that was the sound of the river. With an instinctive seeking of shelter, he crept into the little wood which grew close on the bank of the stream. His weary limbs could carry him no farther ; a numbness was creeping over his senses, the gurgling of the water seemed as music in his ears, and he could fancy he heard Ellen singing her pretty hymn :—

" I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest ;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon my breast."

Little Charlie smiled ; he reposed his weary head on a soft mossy cushion ; the numbing sensation prevented him feeling the cold and wet ; we would hope no human eye was there to watch the child, but imagination fills up the blanks which facts left in the picture. No tears flowed now, but the heavy eyelids drooped, and a deep

sleep brought entire oblivion of all his griefs. Thus, in many a baby sorrow, Charlie had found comfort and rest while cradled in his mother's arms. To her he had ever turned from his little nurse Ellen, and been lulled to rest.

The rain was falling heavily when Mrs. Dickson took her way homeward. She had passed a merry afternoon, bought the trumpet and the lion for her little darling first, and then spent all her remaining money in seeing shows, and putting into lotteries, and buying refreshments. When, on emerging from the little play-house, she found that rain had begun to fall, she at once thought of her children. Perhaps Ellen would have taken Charlie into the fields, and he would get wet in coming home, and the girl would not have the sense to put him warm, dry clothes on, and so he would catch a cold. Her heart reproached her for having left them, and she hastened to find the neighbour who had borne her company, and beg of her to return with her. But Mrs. Jones was exceedingly unwilling to adopt this measure. "Don't be so timid about the children, neighbour; they will take no harm. Ellen is a very steady, thoughtful girl, and she will take good care of Charlie. Mrs. Thompson, the grocer, has invited us to take a cup of tea with her, and I am sure I feel the need of it." Mrs. Dickson consented to stay for this; and as they sat at their cheerful meal, they heard the heavy rain beating against the windows, and the darkness stole over the earth. About seven o'clock, Mrs. Dickson, still failing in persuading Mrs. Jones to leave the fair, set off on her homeward route alone. Her best gown would be spoilt, and the ribbon of her bonnet was already so, and the children would be crying for their tea. These reflections did not tend to make Mrs. Dickson feel very happy. She reached the bridge, and the swollen waters rushed through the piers with a wailing sound. An indefinite fear seized on the mother's heart, and she hurried forward more rapidly.

"Neighbour Dickson, is that you?" said a familiar voice, in a very sad tone.

"Yes, Mrs. Ingleby, it's me," she replied, vexed that she of all people should have seen how late she was. "It is late to be going away from home," she added, "but maybe, after all, you've a mind to see some of the stirrings at the fair?"

"No, Mary Dickson, honey, I was coming to seek you."

"Oh, neighbour, what's wrong! Has Charlie got the croup? or has he met with an accident?"

"Not so bad as either, I hope, honey," replied Mrs. Ingleby, "but the child's strayed, and none of us can find him. His father has gone along the path by the river side, where the children often play; but he was late in coming home, having stopped at the public-house a bit; and we had looked, as ever we could look, all about the village. Poor little Nelly is almost beside herself: her father was sore angered against her for losing sight of the bairn; and she has wandered about and got wet, and cried her eyes almost out; so I just gave her some warm tea, and made her lie down on the settle in my house, while I comed to seek you, for we was all in hopes that the child had followed you to the fair."

"May-be he did follow me, neighbour, but certain it is that he didn't find me. I'll away back to the town and search there, and get the bellman to go round—if so be that you can lend me a sixpence, neighbour, to pay him, for I have no money left in my pocket."

She blushed to own this to Mrs. Ingleby, knowing that she would disapprove of her having squandered her earnings at the fair. But the good woman had no censure for her neighbour, now that she was in affliction, but readily agreed, not only to lend the money, but to accompany her to the town, to help in the search.

Alas, searching and inquiring were alike in vain. In the bustle of the fair, the distressed child had attracted the attention of very few persons, and those had already returned by various paths to their country homes.

The curfew bell was ringing from the old church tower, and mothers and nurses were laying the little ones to rest in many a household, poor and rich, in the now hushed town. The church-bell ceased, and immediately, another sounded, sharp and clear, in the streets. It was a strange hour for the bellman's voice to be heard, and people listened with startled mien.

"Lost, a little boy of four years old, answering to the name of Charlie Dickson."

The rain pattered heavily against the windows, and the wind howled in the chimneys; and the little children in the snug nurseries huddled closely together, scared and terror struck at the thought of a poor child being out alone on such a night!

Many a prayer arose for the wanderer, from hall and cottage, and happy mothers hugged their little ones the closer, as they sent pitying thoughts towards the parents of the lost one.

It was midnight before poor Mrs. Dickson could be persuaded to leave the town; nor would she have gone then, but that Mrs. Ingleby suggested that the child might by this time have wandered homewards. She found her house empty. Her husband, with some of the men of the village, had gone out with lanterns, to search afresh each haunt of the missing darling, and little Ellen still slept away her sorrow on Mrs. Ingleby's settle.

Mrs. Dickson made up the fire, and got out clean clothes for her pet, hanging them to the fire to warm; and she put on the kettle, to be ready to give him some hot tea. While performing these loving services, her heart's wild sorrow was lulled; but when nothing else remained to be done, it broke out afresh.

"Oh, neighbour Ingleby," she cried, as she rocked herself backwards and forwards on her chair, "all this comes of my lightness and folly in going to the fair. If only I had listened to your words and stopped quietly at home, my bonny bairn would have been now asleep in his bed. Hark, was that a step? No, it is only the wind. Oh Charlie, my bonny honey, art thou out on this wild night! It will be the death of thee, my lamb, and all along of thy sinful mother!"

At this moment the door opened slowly, and poor little Ellen, pale and trembling, crept in. She began to cry very much, when she saw her mother, and seemed afraid to approach her. "Come here, honey," cried the broken-spirited woman, "if thou hast done wrong, thy mother has done far worse, and she has no word to say against thee. Maybe, thou's all the bairn I have this night!"

"Oh, mother, mother, let's pray to God. He knows where Charlie is, and he will comfort him and keep him safe, if we ask him."

They all fell on their knees, and their cry arose to God, mingled with sobs and groans. A human ear could hardly have understood those broken petitions; but God understood them, his ear is open to the cry of distress; some degree of calm entered the heart of the wretched mother. She could sit quietly now with Ellen on her lap, the poor child's aching head pillowed on her breast.

Thus they were when the morning dawned, and the wearied father returned, with no tidings of his son.

Coldly the grey dawn stole over hill and valley, and the light crept into the shady woods, and showed the dripping branches clothed with rain drops instead of leaves.

* * * * *

There was a busy scene in Squire Hodgson's hall. Men-servants hurried to and fro, horses were brought out, dogs bayed loudly. A party of gentlemen in red coats issued from the dining-room, laughing and joking.

"To horse, to horse, my brave boys away!" sang the squire cheerily, as he vaulted into the saddle; and a younger man caught up the strain as they rode leisurely away. "'Tis a beautiful scent-lying morning." The hounds were to "throw off" in a wood on the river's bank, and thither the whole party of men and dogs repaired at once. For a time the intelligent animals beat about, venting their doubts in uncertain and impatient baying; but suddenly this ceased, and the most eager of the huntsman pushed forward, expecting that they had found the fox.

But no. There stood the dogs, mute and transfixed; but the object of their attention was not a fox, but a little child lying as if asleep, drenched in the night rain, and quite dead!

Some of the gentlemen, as they rode to their early rendezvous, had heard of the child missing from the neighbouring hamlet; so they at once directed the poor little corpse to be borne thither. Some labourers took the little creature in their arms and carried it away; and after spending a few minutes in compassionate thoughts on the bereaved parents, the search for the fox recommenced.

Dickson had been up all night, and he had no heart to go to his work in the morning. He had come home angry with his wife, but her grief and self-reproach had at once disarmed him. Early in the morning the kind minister called to offer his sympathy in their sorrow, and his friendly words and earnest prayer fell as a balm on their aching hearts. They were thus engaged when the labourers entered to restore the lost one.

They laid the child on its mother's knees, and her tears poured like rain on its unconscious face. The father knelt beside it, sobbing aloud; and little Nelly clung to him helplessly. The minister again knelt, and prayed that God would give them His Holy Spirit to teach them themselves and the love of Jesus, and thus to fit them for His happy kingdom, where there is no more pain, and sorrow, and separation.

Earnestly they then were led to seek to "know Christ," and continued so to seek; and God satisfied their hearts, and gave them the "garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

* * * * *

On the day of the following Martinmas fair, Mrs. Dickson again dressed herself neatly, and bade Ellen do the same. She then took the child by the hand, and led her quietly out. But she did not take the path to the town. They entered the pretty church-yard together, and made their way to a little mound, where spring flowers had bloomed, and which was kept carefully free from all nettles and ugly weeds.

On the simple stone at the head of the grave was written—

“He took them up in His arms,
Put His hands upon them,
And blessed them.”

“Nelly, my child,” said the mother, “a great affliction came upon us this day last year; but we have felt a great change since. It is no pain to them that love Jesus to stop away from fairs and such like places, for they only care to be where He goes with them. His love more than makes up for ever so great a loss, for He is always with us, caring for us, and helping us.”—*Treasury*.

LETTER TO A YOUNG MOTHER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I rejoice to gather from the long letter I lately received from you, that you are thinking so earnestly over the fresh prospect of duty and delight that lays before you in the training of your precious little son. You are quite right in supposing that this part of his education should begin from the first moment that the dear child can understand what you say to him. If all mothers would but give that proof of their love to their child, which Solomon himself tells us consists in “chastening him betimes,” how much trouble and suffering might be spared, both to the little ones and their parents. It is surely not a difficult thing to make a little fellow of two years old, or even younger, know that he must do what he is told, even if some slight penalty be requisite to establish the mother’s authority. But the child is just then of such a charming age that even his naughtiness is almost engaging; at all events it gives so little trouble to those about him, that it requires some self-denial to punish or restrain him in it. Suppose, for instance, your little boy has taken bricks or any other toy out of a box, and when he has done with it, you tell him to put it by, and he refuses; it would be easier for you at the moment to put away these

trifles yourself, than to oblige him to do it; but you would lose the opportunity of giving him a lesson both in obedience and orderliness, which steadily repeated will help to lay the foundation of two valuable qualifications for later years. A selfish or thoughtless mother passes over these little disobediences and tiny outbreaks, because they give her no personal annoyance; but when the child who was petted and spoiled while his peccadilloes gave no trouble, becomes selfish, exacting, and mischievous, at six or seven years old, those who before indulged him and brought about the evil, will be sorely tempted to give the hasty slap, or severe privation, which being then for the first time inflicted, causes the feelings of ill-will and resentment to rise up in the mind of him that receives them.

By what I have said on the score of enforcing obedience, I hope you do not think that I would, for one moment, deprive you of the love of your little son, or of the full enjoyment of showing your warmest affection to him. A child who knows once for all that his parent must be obeyed, only loves her all the more dearly on this account, and the little restraint thus laid on his temper and disposition, makes him far happier than if he was allowed to follow his own devices. As an instance of this I might relate to you a fact, which has come more than once under my own observation: a mother who had early adopted this system of training, and from the first had accustomed her little ones to habits of implicit obedience, could not get her nurse, though valuable in other respects, to enter into her own views on this point. Nurse could not be persuaded to give up the opinion of Mrs. Dinmore with respect to her bairns, who would give the "puir things their ain way," because she had nothing else to give them.

The consequence of this different treatment, when the little creatures were about two years old and upwards, was very remarkable. When down stairs with papa and mama, the child would be obedient, happy, ready to find amusement for himself, and would take patiently a refusal, when it was not proper to give him what he asked for. Not ten minutes after, you might find the same little creature in the nursery, disobedient, difficult to please, and screaming with disgust whenever his fancies could not be gratified. The mother who was quite aware of the reason for this different conduct, and of the real cause of the frequent squalling which it occasioned, would, as the boy grew older, go up herself to the nursery, or send for the child

down stairs, when one of these outbreaks took place; her presence, and a few grave words, (for more was seldom necessary,) had the effect of re-calling the child to his better self, and restoring him to cheerfulness. As the child grew older, a slight penalty was incurred whenever these vociferations became audible; and the nurse taking advantage of this regulation, when any of her charges became unmanageable in the nursery, would place the little culprit outside the door, that the fear of consequences might lead him to relinquish the screams which she could not pacify.

My chief object in relating this little fact, is to prove to you how very much the firm guidance of the parent conduces to the happiness of the child himself. When he once knows that to cry for a thing never obtains it for him, how much fretting and anxiety is altogether done away with. The subject of our little ones is so interesting to a mother, that it is difficult to know when to stop; but I must not weary you with a longer epistle now, and remain, yours truly,

MARY G. KENNEDY.

BATH, June, 1862.

STRENGTH FOR THE WEAK.

AN aged Christian lady was obliged to submit to a tedious and painful operation. She made no complaint, she showed no impatience, she sat perfectly calm.

When the operation was over, the doctor said to her, "How could you be so calm, under so much suffering?" She replied, "I was upheld by an arm, that is invisible and invincible."

She had found the words used by Moses to show the excellence of the people chosen by God true in her case. She had made the "Eternal God" her "refuge," and she could say, "underneath are the everlasting arms." Her support was from God. It was invisible, no one saw it, but she felt it in her soul; and in him there is true strength for his children.

The strength that God gives in the souls of those who love and serve him, is invisible, but it is invincible; it cannot be conquered. This strength enabled the martyrs to endure cruel torments without shrinking. It is freely given still. Would you like this strength to be given you? Trust in God, believing in Jesus Christ, and "ask and ye shall receive," for Jesus said, "whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do." (John xiv. 13.)

FATHERS AND MOTHERS, ACT IN UNISON.

How impossible it is for children to be trained aright, when parents do not act conjointly, or contradict each other's commands, thereby rendering it impossible for children to obey both. For instance, a mother says to her little girl—"Martha, I wish you to do such a thing directly." The child has a foolishly indulgent father, who, she knows, has often yielded to her wishes before, and let her have her own way, even though in opposition to her mother; she goes to him and says, "Father, I do not like to do so and so (what her mother has just told her to do)—I need not do it, need I?" Perhaps the answer will be, "No, my dear; it is of no importance, you may leave it alone." Where, after a few such instances as that, is the mother's influence over that child? It is irrecoverably lost, and who is to blame but the father? The child grows up despising its mother's authority, and spoiled by an indulgent father.

Again, perhaps a son has acted disobediently; the father sees it right to inflict some punishment upon his child; before that punishment has expired (perhaps it might be some kind of confinement for a certain length of time), the father may be called away; the mother releases the boy, fondles over him, and says, "It was too bad; you did not deserve to be used so." That child may dread his father, but the mother is not teaching him to love and honour him, and she is making a rod for herself. That boy will grow up to be a source of trouble to her; he will not respect her, but will laugh her authority to scorn, and most likely quit the parental roof and all restraint at the first opportunity.

I am well acquainted with two instances where the parents have acted just like this. A little girl commenced attending an infant class in a Sunday School; the first few times she was very regular, but gradually her attendance became less and less constant. The teacher called to talk to the mother about it—various trifling reasons had previously been assigned—but now the mother at length said, "Ma'am, I must *candidly* confess I have given up trying to make her come; for sometimes, when I have positively said she should come, she has gone and asked her father to let her stay, and though he has heard what I have just said, still he gives way, and says, 'Yes, you may stay.' He always yields to her wishes." The poor woman appeared to feel it a great trial, as she said she had nearly lost all authority over her child in consequence of its father's indulgence. The child was then not four years old.

A HINT TO MOTHERS.

THERE is an old saying, that "Idleness is the mother of mischief," and another, equally true, "Prevention is better than cure." So I thought one day, when, on entering a poor, crowded cottage, I found two unhappy little twins crying, one on each side of the fire-place. They had been ordered to sit there on the floor because "they were always in the way."

On inquiry, this proved a simple case of being "naughty" because they had "nothing to do." The father, a tailor, was at work mending some old garment, on a large wooden box; the baby, happily, was asleep on the family bedstead; and the mother, busy in household work, was angry with the small pair of children, and had beaten them, because it was contrary to child-nature to "be quiet," and do nothing.

I felt sorry for these active little people, and, by sending them some old toys out of my nursery, and an old box to keep them in, made a change for the better in the comfort of all that family, beginning with the first offenders.

Mothers make a great mistake when they expect their children to be good without employ—in other words, without something to play with—and I hope to be excused if I make a few very humble suggestions on this branch of cottage economy.

Very small things are great pleasures to these little people. They have lively fancies, as well as active limbs. The whole filling up of a long wet day's amusement may be found in a few dozen bits of deal board cut into long squares by their father at night; or in a few broken bits of coloured earthenware, and a few small bits of stick, to make pretence fires; or in a few clean, and, if possible, bright or white pieces of stone or pebbles; common shells, even cockle or mussel shells, are an excellent addition. These I have seen made into houses, and little household fancies wrought out with them for hours, by groups of quiet, happy children.

Such things cost nothing; and if for a treat, and where it can be afforded, a box of ninepins is added, or a small Noah's ark, a "family" is at once provided for the mimic house. Even a few empty cotton bobbins are valuable inmates for such an establishment.

The advantage of such simple kind of toys is, that they never tire, but are returned to day after day with new pleasure, because the fancy has been employed in them. Each time they are used

brings out some new idea in the little minds of the owners. And owners they must be. Their worthless wealth must not be thrown away—not called rubbish. To them it becomes great riches; for it represents ideas found only in the active mind of childhood. Let there be a permitted corner for such outlay, and a bag or old box to put the treasure into when done with, and it will come out fresh another day.

I could wish that any one who despises such plain suggestions could overhear, as I have often done, the bright, pleasant, chirpy talk that goes on while such “gays” are being “righted up” in the corner of a cottage kitchen—the only room perhaps of the poor—or on the bright summer days, in the little garden, under the shade of the trees, or among the flowers. How much better for the busy mother thus to provide for the harmless amusement of her children, than to leave off work, every now and then to slap or scold them for getting into mischief.

To be busy is an instinct of our human nature. It is well to guide it, but worse than useless to fight against it. The happiest children are not those who have the most costly toys. I believe none are happier than the poor man’s child, wisely and kindly treated, whose simple toys, costing almost nothing, are such as I have named, and are felt to be his own.

THE SCHOOL IN THE HOUSE.

EVERY family is a school. All its members are teachers, all are scholars. Without text-books, all study, and by instinct all learn. Looks, smiles, frowns, caresses, reproaches, shrugs, words, deeds, make up daily household lessons, from which each learner derives first, impressions; next, convictions; and then, character.

What the school in the house *should* be, may oftentimes be best known by noticing what it is not. If domestic courtesy and family politeness, and mutual forbearance, and considerate patience, and benefiting love are not in the house, there will be rudeness, and selfishness, and impatience, and strife. These last are scorpions, whose deadly venom is sure destruction of domestic peace, concord, and happiness. Christian parents, you are teachers at home. Let your children learn what practical piety is from the benignity of your tempers, and the blamelessness of your examples.

A HYMN FOR MOTHERS.

LORD, who ordainest for mankind
 Benignant toils and tender cares,
 We thank thee for the ties that bind
 The mother to the child she bears.

We thank thee for the hopes that rise
 Within her heart, as day by day,
 The dawning soul from those young eyes
 Looks with a clearer, steadier ray.

And grateful for the blessing given,
 With that dear infant on her knee,
 She trains the eye to look to heaven,
 The voice to lisp a prayer to thee.

Such thanks the blessed Mary gave,
 When, from her lap, the holy Child,
 Sent from above to seek and save
 The lost of earth, looked up and smiled.

All-gracious, grant to those who bear
 A mother's charge, the strength and light
 To guide the feet that own their care,
 In ways of Love, and Truth, and Right !

TO CHRISTIAN PARENTS:—As I grow older as a parent, my views are changing fast as to the degree of conformity to the world which we should allow to our children. I am horror-struck to count up the profligate children of pious persons, and even ministers. The door at which those influences enter which countervail parental instruction and example, I am persuaded, is, yielding to the ways of good society. By dress, books, and amusements, an atmosphere is formed, which is not that of Christianity. More than ever do I feel that our families must stand in a kind, but determined opposition to the fashions of the world, breasting the waves like the Eddystone lighthouse. And I have found nothing yet which requires more courage and independence than to rise even a little, but decidedly, above the *par* of the religious world around us. Surely the way in which we commonly go on is not that way of self-denial, and sacrifice, and cross-bearing which the New Testament talks of. Then is the offence of the cross ceased. Our slender influences on the circle of our friends is often to be traced to our leaving so little difference between us.—*Dr. W. Alexander.*

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 1ST, 1862,

BY THE REV. J. J. WEST, M.A.

(*Rector of Winchelsea, Sussex,*)

IN THE CHURCH OF ST. BARNABAS, KING SQUARE, LONDON.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit: for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace."—Rom. viii. 5.

THE great and grand declaration of the Gospel is set forth in the opening verse of this chapter, namely, that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Mark—there is "no condemnation" to any man in Christ; that is the statement of the Holy Ghost; that is God's unaltering and unchanging word. But we must have this general statement of a doctrine individually evidenced for ourselves. Personal interest, my hearers, is the grand thing with you and me. We must be sound in truth—not erring there, and then be enabled, by the Spirit's teaching, to ascertain our own interest therein. Now, I own, I cannot conceive a more distinguishing passage by which you and I may try ourselves in the balances of the sanctuary, than the passage I am attempting now to preach from. It wants no division on my part; the distinction is clear and unmistakeable: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh—(that is plain enough)—but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

I read in the Old Testament these words: "And I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." We also read in Isaiah, and Paul adopts it in this Epistle: "A remnant shall be saved." Nothing can hinder the salvation of God's elect. "He sent redemption unto His people; He hath commanded His covenant for ever; holy and reverend is His name." But the point is—and if I were a hearer, I should not be satisfied

The Family Preacher. September, 1862.

with a preacher if he was not the instrument in God's hand to give me some evidence—some criterion test that I was myself personally interested in these great truths. The kingdom of God is not a fiction. "The Gospel is not a vain thing for us, for it is our life." "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

The first point, my hearers, is one upon which I shall dwell only briefly. I am here drawing 'a bow at a venture.' I know several; I feel a Gospel tie to some before me; and there are others of whom I know nothing at all. But in a mixed assembly, and amongst such a mass of people, I must not forget that the blood of souls stains deep, and woe be to me—woe be to any man in the pulpit if he preach not the Gospel. And while, according to this book, which is my only authority, I have no general or indiscriminate invitations to offer, yet I am clearly to show the distinction between the Christian and the worldling. The man who is in the flesh—the unconverted man—cannot understand these things; but I am to declare the truth—to preach the Gospel to every creature.

My hearers, listen to these words. I would proclaim them trumpet-tongued to every one who hears me. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." And all in that state now, whatever God's purposes may be concerning any of them, cannot, in that state, serve—"cannot please" God. Oh! if there be such before me—if there be an infidel before me—if there be those whom Augustus Toplady used to call "Gospel haters and election doubters;" and if you are not brought to true and sincere repentance, you will go to hell.

We cannot tell who are to be made the recipients of the Gospel—some of the most unlikely characters, it may be; such, for instance, as Zacchæus was in the sycamore tree; and mark, when my blessed Lord called him down, when a work of grace was effected in that notorious sinner, when Christ went experimentally to bless and save that man—what was the taunt and what was the cry against the Saviour? The Pharisees and scribes declared, "that He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner."

But, oh, think on that! Do you know anything about the reality of that? "That Christ was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner!" If Christ be our guest, your guest, and mine,—if He who said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people,"—if Christ has become our guest, we must know something experimentally, and we are also safe for heaven. And, my hearers, who need despair, as far as sin and profligacy is concerned—who, I say, need despair on that ground—when we see one so sunk in sin as Zacchæus was, called down by the irresistible grace and power of our glorious Saviour himself from the sycamore tree; and, having called him, then

Himself to become his guest; because, according to eternal purpose, he was saved, through His precious blood, for ever. And why saved? "Forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Or, in other words, Forsomuch as he also is one of God's "own elect."

But the first part of my text is not that which has been specially impressed upon my own heart to preach upon. I leave the subject of the flesh, and I leave those that are in it, with this one comment (the comment of God's own word,) "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." But I now turn to that particular part which, as far as I understand it, seems so specially applicable to the people of God. "But they that are after the Spirit," (do mind!) "the things of the Spirit."

Now I will take an instance—and I cannot conceive a simpler test of the discipleship of the cross. A child of God has been arrested in a course of worldliness and sin—for we are all found there—"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about; He instructed him; He kept him as the apple of His eye." We are all found there; but when a man is born again of the Holy Ghost—and, as our Lord says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"—then there is a change immediately effected. And I cannot conceive a sweeter test of that new birth having been effected in you or me, than when we become personally interested in seeking after our own interest in the blood of the Saviour.

"Oh, could I say the Lord is mine,
'Tis all my soul desires!"

There is the point. "They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit." "I want," says that new-born child, "I want to realize my own interest in sin-atoning blood." And hence that soul becomes engrossed in a way that I cannot express in the pulpit—Engrossed—what shall I say? Engrossed heart and soul to ascertain, "Am I one for whom Christ died?" Now, my hearers, I would preach this fact to you. Here is the test of the discipleship of the cross; and this is the effect of the new birth. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." There must be a thorough change. How does the apostle Paul speak to Timothy? He says, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things!" That is, worldly things—fleshly things—the things of the flesh—"Thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after"—(here we see what are the things of the Spirit)—"follow after righteousness—(that is the righteousness of another, as I understand it, and not

our own)—godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith : lay hold on eternal life." "They that are after the Spirit (do mind) the things of the Spirit." Righteousness is one of those things ; godliness is another ; faith is another.

A word upon faith. I think that there is no subject more misunderstood by the professing Church of God than the subject of justification by faith. Beware of this, of making faith a work and a merit. But faith is the effect of justification. And hence, in this epistle, in a previous chapter, we have the words, "Therefore, being justified"—that is done ; that is the eternal act of Jehovah ; that is the act, if I may so speak, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, before all worlds.—"Therefore being justified, by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Faith is not that which justifies a sinner. Justification is by grace, through the blood and merits of Christ. Faith is the eye of the soul, by which we see, or hope we are justified. Do you see the thing I contend for, my hearers ? Therefore we follow after faith. "By grace are ye saved," (that is done,) "Through faith," (mark how the apostle puts it,) "By grace are ye saved;" and grace signifies God's free, undeserved favour, without anything of ours. Now we will take that whole verse in the Ephesians. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast." Salvation, then, is by grace alone ; and faith is like the eye in the body—the eye by which I see you, and read the passage on which I am speaking — by which we see. Faith is the gift of God and gives us the power of seeing.

Now comes the great point. Have you any faith to believe that great fact ? Here is the testing point. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." And hence God, in mercy, works upon our minds, in order to bring us into a submissive state to receive these great facts. Naturally we are all after the flesh. Analyze yourselves, my hearers ! Remember your lusts—how you would, if left to yourselves, gratify them at times. A regenerate man, if not kept by the mighty power of God, would sin as bad as others. But we are kept by the mighty power of God. My hearers, there is no distinction as to fleshliness between the Church and the world, except that the Church is kept. The world is not kept, and therefore the world indulges the flesh. Here is the distinction. We are no better than other people, except as we are kept. The apostle, in a striking passage, says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." There was grace in Paul. "But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh,

wretched man that I am!" This was what brought Paul to a state of experimental wretchedness. He saw another law. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." There is the Holy Ghost working in the apostle Paul. "But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind." What language this is! Then deliverance comes. Mercy flows into his soul. The spring begins to rise. God sends a cheering word into his heart, and the effect of it is thankfulness—"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And hence comes this deduction.—"So, then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." Hence, in the regenerate man and woman, the old Adam serves the fleshly system still. The old man in you and me hankers after fleshliness still. But there is a spiritual power, which is of God, by which they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit, and the things of God's eternal kingdom. Now see how this passage not only distinguishes between the Church and the world, and between professor and possessor, but see also how it distinguishes betwixt the two natures in every regenerate man, and which two natures are in every one who has undergone the new birth. So that our Lord himself says (and we do not want any other authority), "Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again." That is Christ's own word. And it is very striking that our Lord states these truths to Nicodemus, who was a man of high moral character—a man also of rank and position. You, Nicodemus, must be born again, or you cannot understand the meaning of the kingdom of God—that is, the Gospel.

And now comes the solemn point, my hearers, for myself and for you. What do you and I understand of this discriminating work of the Spirit in our own-selves? What do we understand of it for a dying bed and for a dying hour? We have constant reminders of death. We have constant external calls to think of another state of being. The very petition and prayer that has been offered up in this house of the Lord for her in the parsonage, makes a loud call upon every one here.* I feel it myself. "It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment." My hearers, we have also other instances of it. I was much struck on coming to town yesterday, and on going into the shop of Mr. Paul, who has published from time to time my sermons, to see the shutters up, and to be told when I got into the house, "Mr. Paul is dead!" The publisher of these sermons has gone to his account. Perhaps the preacher of these sermons may soon be called away. And the hearers of the sermon that I am preaching now may soon be summoned to their account.

* Prayer was offered up for the wife of the respected Incumbent of St. Barnabas, who was dangerously ill.

"How stands the case, my soul, with thee?
 For heaven are thy credentials clear?
 Is Jesus' blood thy only plea.
 Is He thy great fore-runner there?

Is thy proud heart subdued by grace
 To seek salvation in His name?
 There's wisdom, power, and righteousness,
 All cent'ring in the worthy Lamb!"

I own I cannot conceive any subject more important for converted people to listen to than the subject of death; and, my hearers, especially so in London, where I am so struck with the incessant occupation of many of you. No time to speak even to some of you; and what is it all for? Business! Money-getting! I don't say a word against that, if it is not carried to excess. But how stands the case with your soul? Are you after the things of the flesh, or are you after the things of the Spirit? If you are after the things of the Spirit, it is from the power of the Spirit working in you both to will and to do of God's good pleasure, and the things of the flesh will then be secondary with you. What is all our preaching for?—what are these services for?—unless preparatory to another state of being? Oh! may we learn those words of my blessed Lord, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Men of business—Christian men—grasp that, grasp it by a living faith,—that if you seek first (and that seeking is not in your own power) the kingdom of God and His righteousness—everything—"all these things shall be added unto you." But you have not faith to trust Him, without he gives it to you, and then "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I hope that this text will be stamped and burnt into your hearts. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Is there not a command in the Bible in this very epistle: "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Now there is a test, which every man that hears me can understand. And, as I said before, one sweet token of our minding the things of the Spirit, is a prayerful, earnest desire to realize our own personal interest in that great atonement for sin which was offered up upon the cross.

And none such seekers need despair. It may be said I preach a narrow path, but a path not so narrow but that it will contain within it every one of God's dear people. Am I addressing any notorious profligate? Am I here speaking before any sceptic or unbeliever? I read in the epistle to the Corinthians, "Such were some of you." I will turn to the words, and read you the catalogue. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators"—(there are plenty of them in London)—"nor idolaters"—(there are plenty of them everywhere; I am afraid often of my own idols)—"Little children, keep yourselves from idols,"—"nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves,"—(they abound in London)—"nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you." Now, my hearers, have these words a meaning? "Such were some of you." Well, then, they were, and had

been, as bad as possible. Now, mark—"But ye are washed; but ye are sanctified; but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Oh, these three "buts!" There is no "but" in the covenant. Poor David knew what it was to be sorely tried, as every child of God must know. But David's comfort on a dying bed was this: "Although my house," (that is my family,) "be not so with God, yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and this is all my salvation and all my desire"—Look, Beloved, how personal these words are. "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant." It is a commanded covenant. "He sent redemption unto His people; He hath commanded His covenant for ever; holy and reverend is His name."

And now mark the other verse in the passage from which I am speaking. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded life and peace." Now, how often does the child of God get into a carnal state of mind, like Hezekiah, when "God left him to try him, that He might know what was in his heart." And you and I are carnally minded whenever God withdraws His presence and power. "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth His face, who then can behold Him? whether against a nation or against a man only." Oh! it is only as the bright shining of God is sent out into the heart of His child that he is anything else but carnally minded. But "to be carnally minded is death." Does not each Christian before me realize that? Have you not felt it in your own experience? But mark the antithesis: "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you are spirit and are life."

Now what do we know of these things? Mark how the chapter concludes: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things,"—what things? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, "in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." "For I am persuaded that neither death"—(that stands first)—"nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Now it is on the ground of that love, and that only, that any man is really spiritually minded. It is the everlasting love of God in Christ which effects this in you and in me. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." And as this chapter opens with the word: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," so also there can be no separation from Him, for His love is as unchanging as HIMSELF. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

My hearers, I shall not say a word about the collection. There is to be one at the close of this service; and I hope you will understand my silence. I will just read this great and grand passage that I have been preaching upon, and telegraph a silent prayer to Him who alone can give us spiritual life, that it may please

Him, in His wonderful goodness, to sanctify this subject to us, when this service is over and we are alone with our God and Father. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded, life and peace."

May God bless the Gospel, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

Sketches and Essays.

HINTS TO PARENTS.

"Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined."

1. PARENTS, bear in mind that children are great imitators; what they see done they will be sure to do; be very watchful, therefore, over your own conduct; act as you wish your children to act. Children can never be well brought up unless parents set them a good example, and agree between themselves on a proper plan to be followed with them.

2. The proper management of children should begin very *early*. A wise mother will seldom let her baby have what it cries for. Even if she thinks it good for the child she will wait until the crying is over, and so show that the crying has not gained anything. Experience proves that this plan, whilst very good for the baby, prevents also much of the noise which often makes a husband's home disagreeable. The same rule of course applies to older children: nothing should be gained by crying, nor yet by teasing—when No or Yes has been once said, there should be no change.

3. Children are far more easily governed by love than by fear: it is God's way of governing; but at the same time, they must obey. If parents let children have their own way, they are soon ruined. Habits of obedience are easily obtained, if parents begin early, and act steadily, and with proper decision; but when children are young, they are too often made playthings of, and not required to do as they are bid, the consequence is habits of opposition and disobedience; these must be overcome as they grow older, and even punishment must be used, if necessary, for that purpose. Perhaps one of the best punishments is to send a child to bed, however early in the day, and keep it there; but whipping must not be withheld, if a child has become disobedient. It is a proof of good management when children require very little punishment, and it is cruelty in parents so to spoil their children when young, as to make harsh treatment necessary afterwards.

4. If you want a child to act rightly, you must make him do what

The Mother's Magazine. October, 1862.

is right. Habits are formed by repeating the same thing often. The same truth applies to things that are wrong; therefore, if you have unfortunately a child inclined to be passionate or sulky, every time he is provoked into a passion, or made sulky, the habit is strengthened; great care should, in consequence, be taken to avoid these passionate or sulky fits. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," is the language of the Bible, a book which gives the best rules for parents to act upon. If, however, the fit cannot be prevented, it should be conquered, and not given way to.

5. Children are seldom made better by much scolding. It is generally wiser to dwell on what is good than to talk of what is bad—thus "to overcome evil with good." Do not give many directions to your children; give them in a quiet tone of voice, and confine them, as far as you can, to something they are to do, or not to do; take care and consider, before a direction is given whether the child understands and can obey it; and after it is given, see yourself that it is carried into effect. Children should not be allowed to stand about listless and idle, parents should either find something to occupy them, or encourage them to play.

6. Parents should not let children argue with them. It is the parents' business to guide and govern children, until they are of an age to guide and govern themselves. God has told parents to train up their children for him; and until they are of an age to look up to their Creator, and feel their responsibility to him, parents stand to them in the place of God, and should have obedience at once. Children soon understand what a parent will require of them. They know whether they are likely to get their own way by coaxing or obstinacy, or whether the parent will be firm in what has been said.

7. Parents should not talk about their children when they are present, nor repeat their pretty sayings before them; it excites vanity. They should also be very cautious not to give way to their own vanity in the dress of their children. A love of dress is easily produced, particularly in a female; and is often a great temptation to sin. Clean, plain, and neat, should be the rule.

8. Parents should not give their children reason to think they suspect them of doing wrong—it often occasions wrong-doing; they should never accuse their children hastily and without some proof, and neither deceive them, nor say to them on any occasion what is

not true. Parents should generally treat their children as if they were what they wish them to be, and this will help them to become so.

9. Parents should be very careful how they give their children peppermints, bulls-eyes, sweets, &c., or money to buy them; an appetite for these things, once excited by indulgence, can with difficulty be resisted, and often leads to thieving, in order to obtain the means of gratifying it. Such articles are to children what spirits are to older persons, and almost equally bad. Parents should also avoid buying for children toys easily broken: it gives bad habits. A slate and pencil, a strong doll, or wooden bricks — or in the country, a wooden spade, a wheelbarrow, &c., are far better.

10. Parents should encourage their children to make little presents to their sisters and brothers on their birth-days, and have a money-box in the house, where they may put their pence and save them for these and other useful purposes.

11. When children ask questions of their parents, it is a sign their minds are at work: they are thinking, and this is very useful to them. The great object in dealing with such questions should be to make children think more. They should never be told what they can find out for themselves; and even what they cannot find out should not be told hastily, as this satisfies their curiosity, and their minds cease to be at work.

12. If a mother has not full time to attend to her young children, or is not able to teach them herself, good infant schools are very much to be recommended; and where there are no infant schools such children should be sent to the schools for older children, as early as they can be received. Punctual attendance at school is very important. Parents, by being particular on this point, cultivate a sense of duty in their children, and help to form the habit of punctuality. Parents should often ask their children what they learn at school, and show an interest in what they are doing. They should also be very particular that their children play in the streets as little as possible, and that they do not get into bad company. When work is given by the teacher to be done at home, parents should take care it is attended to. They should remember that the time given to learning at school only occupies thirty hours a week out of the eighty-four hours of day-light, and that, in consequence, the teacher cannot accomplish much unless help is given at home.

GENTLENESS.

THERE are some noble ladies in this land, in whom this grace is pre-eminently fruitful; they are so gentle in their voice, their manner, their whole demeanour, that many a hasty and bold spirit is softened by their presence; and while they win the more timid to honor, love, and confide in them, they increase rather than diminish that respect to which their rank entitles them. Others, again, from the mode of *education*, have been brought up with no regard to *gentleness*: perhaps *home* has been the scene of their training under a clever governess, whose first care has been to sow seeds of knowledge, and by constant cultivation, to improve the talents God has bestowed. How natural to be proud of the one who has profited most by the instructions given, and how natural to set her up as an example to those of less capacity. Then out of the school-room, how much her parents think of her, and her witty sayings are noticed, while her little deteriorating speeches to those less talented, such as, "I should be sorry to be as stupid as you are," pass unrebuked, and she grows up with a feeling of superiority, and the fruit of the spirit gentleness is absent. Or suppose school to have formed education. There a clever girl is soon discovered: she is the favourite of the mistress, because she is likely to do her more credit than those of less ability; and her talents are made blinds for her principal faults, so that it is no wonder if emulation and self-importance are conspicuous, and meekness and gentleness imperceptible. Sometimes, without superior abilities, education, or rank, we still see that forward boldness—that daring to do or say what a modest, gentle mind would shrink from—it seems innate in some, to have more of the masculine than the feminine nature. Manliness and gentleness are often united in a Christian gentleman; but we cannot understand a gentle masculine woman; it is a contradiction. If we examine the root of the evil, we shall find (whatever be the pre-disposing cause) that want of *humility* is the origin of want of *gentleness*. We are so apt to think highly of what *we* can say or do, that the sharp word, or the hasty manner, is the result, before we have considered about it. How often want of gentleness, is only the effect of want of thought! Time would often be well-spent, if we would allow ourselves to think over what we are going to say or do, we should then be able to set a guard over ourselves, and pray to

God to help us so to watch, as it has been wisely observed, as "never to say an unkind word, if a kind one will do as well." "My people doth not *consider*," the Lord justly says; and what troubles this neglect of considering often brings upon ourselves and others! Let us, then, more frequently "consider our ways," and examine our motives, and this will lead to more self-control; we shall put a restraint on ourselves, which will make us watchful, and feeling how soon we may err, we shall be very earnest in praying, "Keep my mouth with a bridle;" "Set a watch before my mouth;" "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." Thus hasty and unbecoming words will be exchanged for the meekness and gentleness of Christ, "and esteeming others better than ourselves," we shall be ready, with kind words, and sympathising actions, and thus recommend the holy religion of our blessed Saviour; the prominent characteristic of which is *love*. The more we seek to be conformed to this image, the more humble we shall become; for to be lowly-minded as He was, we must first be like-minded. May the Holy spirit of promise (whose gentle influences have been compared to the soft, descending dew, or the peaceful hovering of the dove) work in us both to will and to do, that we may be enabled "plenteously to bring forth the fruit of good works" to the glory and praise of God.

HOW TO DISPOSE OF CARE.*

THERE is such a thing as care. Who does not know it by experience? Who has not felt it at his heart? How heavily it presses there! and it pierces too. It is a burden; and it also has a sting. Nothing is more unfriendly to happiness than care. It is hard being happy with a load on the heart. The objects of care are almost innumerable. What shall I eat? What shall I drink? or wherewithal shall I be clothed? are only a few of its anxious interrogations, and they are among the least important of them. These concern ourselves; but care often forgets self in its solicitude for others. Parents, and especially mothers, know what I mean by this. But I need not attempt to explain a word that expresses what we all feel.

There is a care both for ourselves and others, which God himself has cast upon us; and of which it were sinful to attempt to make

* Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

any other disposition than he has made of it. But over and above this, there is a large amount of solicitude and anxiety which we lay upon ourselves, and which is unnecessary, useless, injurious. This is the care that is unfavourable to happiness. The other is friendly to it. It is very desirable to get rid of it since it does us harm, and does no one good. Nothing is more hostile to the successful care of the soul than the pressure and poignancy of the care of which I speak. "Careful and troubled about many things," we intermit, or entirely overlook the care of the "one thing needful." But what shall we do with it—how get rid of it, since to bear it is so painful to our feelings, and often so ruinous to our better interests? Divide it with others we may to some little extent. There is such a thing as sympathy. There is such an operation as unburdening the mind to a fellow-creature. And I will not deny that there is some relief in it. Yet the very etymology of the word sympathy evinces that it is no remedy. It is, after all a suffering together. A great deal of what constitutes sympathy, is grief that we can but grieve—sorrow that we cannot succour. Mixing tears does indeed diminish their bitterness, but weeping with those that weep does not wipe away their tears. They weep on, and the only difference is, that we weep with them, and our tears may be said to dilute theirs.

There is a better way of disposing of care than to cast it on our fellow-creatures. Indeed, what fellow-creatures can we find who have not enough of their own to bear, without receiving additional burden from us? What friend has not himself surplus care to dispose of?

There are some who cast off care without reference to what becomes of it. They sing, "Begone, dull care." These are the reckless. Care may go at their bidding, but the worst of it is, it is sure to return again, and it comes back a heavier burden—duller than ever. This is not the way to dispose of care. Yet there is a way whereby all excess of anxiety may be effectually removed, and the heart be left with all its tender affection, and yet with no more solicitude than such as the blessed in heaven might feel without diminution of happiness. It is to cast care on God. That is the true and only effectual way to dispose of care. He can take the burden, however huge and heavy. You do not doubt that; but you ask, "Will he?—may I cast it on him? I, such a one as I, cast my cares, the whole multitude and burden of them, on such a being as

God? I know the government of the mighty universe, and the providence which extends to the minute equally as to the magnificent—reaching low as to the fall of a sparrow, and the numbering of the hairs of the head, does not distract or burden him. I know he can take a larger charge, and not feel it. But will he? Will such greatness stoop to such littleness?—such holiness come down to such vileness?” Yes, it will, for condescension is one characteristic of greatness; and “the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” But why do I reason? Does not the Holy Ghost say, by David, “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee?”—and by Peter, “Casting all your care upon him?”—and by Paul, “Be careful for nothing?”—and does not Immanuel himself say, “Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?” No longer ask if you may, but use your privilege. Here is your authority. The Lord says you may do it. Nay, more, commands you to do it. It is your duty, as well as your privilege. So far is it from being presumptuous to cast your care on God, it is a sin not to do it.

This is the way to dispose of care; and it is no matter how much there is of it. God will take it all. It is no burden to him. Many have made this disposition of their cares, and all testify how willingly he took and bore them; and if at times they took back the burden, yet willingly he received it again, when again it was cast upon him.

There is a reason given by Peter for casting care on God, that is inexpressibly touching. He says, “Casting all your care on him,” and then follows no flourishing of rhetoric, no parade of reasons, but this—oh how happily selected, I would say, but that he wrote by inspiration which does everything felicitously—“for he careth for you.” Why should you care for yourself, since God cares for you? Ah, here is a topic, not for the meditation of an hour merely, but of an eternity. He careth for you. Can it be? Oh why should he? What a thought to carry through this vale of tears, and to go down with into the deeper valley of death, that God cares for me! He concerns himself about me! Let the scholar look at the original. The English is good enough, but the Greek is far more interesting. God has me on his heart. Some poor saints think nobody cares for them. But God does. Is not that enough? He that regards the cry of the raven, and gives all the fowls of heaven their food, and decks the lilies of

the field, doth much more care for you. He concerns himself for his creatures, will he not much more for his children? Are ye not of much more value, whom no less a price could redeem than the blood of his Son? Let this suffice for you.

I know not anything that goes so soon and surely to my heart, as the sight of a poor, sobbing, or sorrowfully-looking child, an orphan, or worse than parentless, whom no one seems to care for. But if I wept at such a sight, it dries my tears to think that there is, after all, one who cares for the poor child—even he who said, “Suffer little children to come unto me.” Oh come, let us cast our care on God. Let us go to Jesus for rest. In him we shall find sympathy such as man can feel, with support such as only God can afford. There we shall meet with such pity as at first weeps with the sufferer, and then wipes away his tears. Surely he who bare our sins will not refuse our cares. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.”

A SKETCH OF SUSANNAH ARNOLD.

BY HER BROTHER, DR. ARNOLD, IN A LETTER TO ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

“I MUST conclude with a more delightful subject—my most dear and blessed sister. I never saw a more perfect instance of the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind—intense love, almost to the annihilation of selfishness—a daily martyrdom for twenty years, during which she adhered to her early-formed resolution of never talking about herself: thoughtful about the very pins and ribands of my wife’s dress, about the making of a doll’s cap for a child; but of herself (save only as regarded her ripening in all goodness) wholly thoughtless. Enjoying everything lovely, graceful, beautiful, high-minded, whether in God’s works or man’s, with the keenest relish; inheriting the earth to the very fulness of the promise, though never leaving her crib or changing her posture; and preserved through the very valley of the shadow of death from all fear or impatience, or from every cloud of impaired reason which might mar the beauty of Christ’s Spirit’s work. May God grant that I might come but within one hundred degrees of her place in glory!”

THE TWO BIBLES.

A TRUE ACCOUNT.

JOHN BROWN was a poor man, living at A——, in Yorkshire. He had a large family, whom he struggled to maintain in comparative comfort, by getting work as a bricklayer, to which trade he had been brought up. John was seldom in want of work, for he was a pious man, and God, whom he served, would not suffer him to want. But unvarying prosperity is not good for God's own people. There would be nothing to test the strength of our religious principles, had we not our seasons of trial. So it occasionally happened that John Brown was thrown out of employment, and great poverty severely tried his faith; but he trusted on, and was enabled to say, through all, "It is well for me that I have been afflicted." That was particularly the case in the event about to be related.

John Brown was taken very ill, and for some time was laid on a bed of suffering. When he was sufficiently strong to commence his work again, he found, to his dismay, that there was nothing for him to do; for while he was ill, other hands were employed, and now of course, they could not be turned off. What was to be done? He walked many weary miles, in hopes of meeting with better success, but to no purpose. His children were crying for bread, for they were obliged now almost entirely to depend upon the small sums which his wife could gather together, by taking in plain work, of which she could do but very little, with her numerous little ones to attend to. But what distressed John more than all, was the knowledge that he was unable to pay his rent. This had always been his first care on receiving his wages: but now for some weeks he had been unable to pay any rent, and the landlord, who was not very well off himself, threatened to seize all the things John had, if he did not find the money. His threat was put into execution the following Monday, when, on calling for the week's rent, he found the poor man had nothing whatever to give him. John saw the few little things he had left taken away, with a sad heart, and weeping eyes; but there was no sorrow compared with that he experienced when he saw them take his old well-worn Bible. He entreated them to leave that; but the landlord only answered, that he ought to be very thankful he was not turned out of doors; that it was only in consideration of his having paid his rent regularly before, that he did not do this;

and he had better be quiet, and get some money, or that would be the next thing. Though this was said in a harsh, rude manner, John felt its truth, and strove to be thankful for this mercy, and prayed that God would help him in this hour of need.

God was not long in answering the poor man's prayer; for some houses, shortly afterwards, were to be built in the neighbourhood, and John was one of the first men employed. By his great industry, and well-known good conduct, his employers raised his wages, and he lost no time in paying off his debts. Of course, it was some time, even by the strictest economy, before he got quite clear; and great indeed was his joy when he had completed the payment. His next care was to purchase a new Bible, for he said, "We can do without food for the body better than we can do without food for the soul." Accordingly, the first few pence he had to spare, he took, and sallied forth to an old book stall, and there asked for a Bible. The shopman pulled down a large one from the top shelf, and gave it him. It had originally been a very nice one, but from much use, and lately much dis-use, it had become very shabby. However, poor John was delighted to have a Bible of any kind, and so he purchased it. Very long that evening did he sit reading its sacred pages at home. Just when he was going to close it, he noticed the fly leaf and title-page were stuck together. He found it difficult to separate them, for they seemed to have been intentionally pasted down. At last he succeeded, and great was his surprise, when he saw fall on the floor several bank notes to the value of £40.

In the leaf he read these words:—"I always was an eccentric old gentleman, and this may seem odd. But I have just made my will, and having nothing to do with these £40, I shall paste them inside my old Bible, and send it to an old book-stall. For, anybody poor enough to be obliged to buy such an old Bible as this, and pious enough to want it, I think a worthy person to have my £40. Take it, my fellow-Christian; you are welcome!"

It would be impossible to describe poor John's delight when he read these words: he blessed the eccentric old gentleman in his heart, again and again; and, above all, he returned most grateful thanks to his heavenly Father, who had fulfilled his promise to him, "They who love the Lord shall not want any good thing." It quite set him up, and he was never afterwards known to be in actual

want. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in him." (Psalm xxxiv. 6—8.)

MORNING-CLOUD RELIGION.

I HAVE stood in a Swiss valley at the time of sunrise, and seen the mountain-peak above me crowned with a beautiful white coronal. As the first sunlight strikes it, the cloud of morning incense is tipped with rosy fire. One moment it is fleecy white ; then it is glowing pink ; then burnished gold ; then—gone for ever. Before we could call out to our companions to behold the beautiful spectacle, the glory-cloud was dissolved into empty air ; and the icy mountain-top stood out sharp and bare against the eastern sky.

Turning from the rocky peaks of jasper, toward the valley about us, lo ! the grass is a floor of diamonds ; the dewdrops are all jewels. On the hedges hang the necklaces of pearl ; over the fields are sown the living sapphires. We go in reluctantly to our morning meal ; we come out again, and where is the jewellery ? Gone for ever in the hot rays of the conquering sun. The mountain-top is bare ; the earth is dry. The morning cloud and the early dew are both among the things that were. Opening our Bible, and turning to the book of Hosea, we find these very words employed to describe a certain sort of showy but short-lived religion.

As nearly every church may contain more or less members whose religion is no more real and abiding than the vapour on the mountain-top, it is worth while to inquire the causes, and the cure of transient piety. May we not find in one or all of the three following reasons the answer to this inquiry ?

I. The convicted soul, in its first awakening, was not brought to a genuine loathing and abandonment of known sin. In other words, there was no Bible-repentance. The impressions of many awakened persons are merely terror. They feel the danger of sin, but not its abominable filthiness. They quake at the sight of God as a punisher, but do not quake at their own guiltiness. They see that there is a hell that follows after their sins, but do not see that there is a hell too in their sins. Of course such persons do not abandon sin thoroughly, or seek after a radical change of heart. And without "grief and hatred of sin" there can be no Bible-repentance. A religion that

began in mere spasmodic terror, is likely to end as it began. For a man who has not abandoned his favourite sins, his petted and profitable sins, cannot claim to be a genuine enduring Christian.

II. The awakened soul, when troubled by legal terrors, did not betake itself to Christ. Sensibly diseased, it compounded quack remedies for itself. Christ was not sought after, believed on, and heartily embraced. There was no love of Jesus awakened as a master-passion with the man. Had the soul reached Christ, it were safe. For there are few apostacies from Calvary. Believers hold to the cross, because the cross holds them.

III. A third cause of morning-cloud religion is the attempt to live on promises instead of performances. The man trusts in resolutions, and never reaches actual downright doing of duty. He means to be—hopes to be—promises to be actively obedient to Christ—but never does one deed, or makes one sacrifice for him. On the day when the covenant of church-membership is made, the young novice is fluent in promises for his future life. He will serve God to-morrow. The morrow comes and goes, and sees not one stroke of thorough service done, not one sin crucified, not a single labour of charity undertaken. Before a week has rolled by, the man's religion has begun to evaporate, and in a year there is nothing left of him but a name on the church register.

How many a brilliant beginning have we seen that so soon ended in nothingness! For a brief time the cloud was beautiful. As it hung in prominence before our eyes, the rays of hope painted it with a ruddy glow. Christian friends hailed it as a cloud of promise. Praying souls—who had longed for just such appearances of piety in the man—grew thankful that their prayers were receiving a fulfilment.

But presently it grew thinner. It began to scatter into looseness, then into emptiness. It was not a shower-cloud of spiritual blessings, like the life of an Oberlin, a Raikes, a Haldane, a Whitfield, or a Harlan Page. But only vapour! Beautiful vapour for a little time, and then vanishing away.

In every church there may be just such professors. They are not backsliders, for they never had any genuine grace to lapse from. Are they hypocrites? Perhaps not; for that is a harsh word, and implies cold-blooded deception and falsehood. These unhappy persons never intended to deceive others, they were simply deceived

in themselves. They entered the church from an entirely mistaken view of their own condition. Perhaps they were the subjects—or rather the victims—of a spurious religious excitement. Or, under the foolish persuasion of injudicious friends, were hurried into church engagements. Their vows are no longer regarded. Their professions no longer deceive. A galling yoke of bondage is their church-membership now, when it ought to be the symbol and the seal of a happy wedded union to Jesus Christ.

BUSY HERE AND THERE.

ABSORBED in inferior matters, the confession has fallen from many lips, "As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." (1 Kings xx. 40).

Sad has been the acknowledgement from many a disciple, "As thy servant was busy here and there," engrossed with topics remote from present duty, losing sight of covenant engagements, "he was gone." That neighbour, acquaintance, unbelieving friend, for whose eternal welfare I ought to have made direct exertions, has passed for ever beyond my reach. That opportunity of benefiting such a family or neighbourhood, of prevailing on such a neglecter of the public ordinances to frequent the sanctuary, has glided away unimproved.

Nor has this confession been a stranger to the Christian parent. "As thy servant was busy here and there," not duly mindful of the home vineyard, the work there required, my child has gone, perhaps, to the grave and to the world of retribution, no more to hear the teachings of maternal affection, nor those lessons which a father's position and experience qualify him to give. Or if living, he has gone from the atmosphere, the example, the influence of home. Not as I might and should, have I taken advantage of that former season when the heart is most susceptible, and the voice of God is heard, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." My child has gone, passed through the different stages of early life—gone not fortified to meet the temptations of an ensnaring world.

And so the child favored with a pious parentage, taught betimes by a devoted mother to rest his hope on the blessed Saviour. Wrung with anguish, not a few have confessed, "As thy servant was busy here and there," little appreciating a mother's advice, with the pencil

of imagination drawing delusive pictures of the future, sketching scenes and paths of early bliss, she is gone. Her lovely form has receded from my view. Those lips, accustomed with all gentleness to give line upon line, and precept upon precept, will do so no more. Henceforth, near the throne they will be occupied in praising redeeming love.

Many a young man, having left the beaten track, the great highway of truth for one of the bye-paths of error, has said when too late, "As thy servant was busy here and there," now devouring the contents of this infidel book, pamphlet, newspaper; now hearing this sceptical lecturer or preacher; now mingling in circles which calumniate the gospel, its ministers, and disciples;—thus "busy here and there," the principles of truth, early and faithfully inculcated, are gone.

Surprised by their last sickness, without adequate preparation, many a wasted, emaciated one, hardly able to speak, is saying at this moment, "As thy servant was busy here and there," intent on pleasure, honor, wealth, life with its opportunities has all but vanished. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

THE CASKET OF JEWELS.

A CERTAIN nobleman, for political reasons, was banished from the kingdom. On the eve of departure, he called his steward, and gave into his keeping a casket of small, but very precious jewels. Years went by, and still the nobleman was wandering in foreign lands. The steward, in failing health, still faithful to his trust, sought a place of security for the costly and precious stones. Accordingly, he cut into a tender tree, and beneath its bark hid the treasure.

Many years later the nobleman was permitted to return from his long exile. The steward was gone, but his lord knew well the secret of his deposit. Where the young tree once stood, now towered the thrifty oak, with its bark hardened and roughened by time. But well it had kept its trust. Though the firm wood had closed over it, and no eye could divine its hiding place, it was still secure. The tree was felled, and in its very heart the gems were found; not a point broken. They flashed in the light with the same brightness as in former days, and rejoiced the heart of the owner.

Is not each lesson of truth deposited in the mind of the young,

like that hidden treasure? Is not the teacher like that faithful steward? When our Lord, now banished from his rightful realm on earth, shall come again to seek His own, may not the precious jewels which the true teacher quietly and faithfully hid, then be found beautiful as ever, to the joy of the rightful owner?

DO YOU PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD?

THERE is no greater happiness than to pray with those we love. It is the perfection of the intercourse of affectionate hearts. Soul blends with soul most perfectly when both are melted down under the influence of the Holy Spirit at the feet of Jesus. But these precious emotions assume peculiar tenderness when those thus brought under the presence of our blessed Lord are the dearest objects of the parents' hearts, their children. Such intercourse draws the parent more closely and tenderly to the child. It so softens the tenderest affections, as to make the parents' souls melt and mingle more deeply and inseparably with that of the child. There the sacred influence, the Holy Spirit, comes down as when the melting fire burneth, and fuses soul with soul in a union deeper, stronger, closer, than anything of earth. As religion is necessary for the perfection of the human character, prayer is necessary for the perfection of human friendship and earthly affection. No parent loves his child so tenderly as he who prays faithfully and feelingly with that child. If, without prayer, you love your child well, you will, by praying with him, love him still better.

Moreover, this solitary prayer with your child makes an impression that can never be forgotten. It gives an emphasis deep and abiding to all you say to him about religion. This precious influence fixes indelibly in that sensitive soul the delicate colors of heavenly truth and instruction. It makes the child love you more devotedly and tenderly. It twines his affections, like sensitive tendrils, around your heart, with a closeness and strength nothing can dissolve. It makes him grow up with a stronger love for you. It gives him a deeper reverence for all connected with religion. This prayer with your child leads God "with favour to compass him as with a shield." Do not forego this very great luxury of praying with one you love so well. Father, mother, will you not henceforth pray with your child?

CURING FOOLISH FEARS.

THE mother of Mrs. Opie died when her daughter was but fifteen—a critical age indeed for a girl to be deprived of the guide of maidenhood. Her character is best described by an incidental reference which Mrs. Opie makes in her fragment of autobiography, where she says:—

“I was naturally a fearful child ; but I was not allowed to remain so. Well do I remember the fears which I used to indulge, and prove by tears and screams, whenever I saw the objects that called forth my alarm. The first terror was of black beetles, the second of frogs, the third of skeletons, the fourth of a black man, and the fifth of madmen. My mother, who was as firm from principle as she was gentle in disposition, made me take a beetle in my hand, and so convince myself it would not hurt me. As her word was law, I obeyed her, but often with a shrinking frame : but the point was carried ; and when, as it frequently happened, I was told to take up a beetle and put it out of the way of being trod upon, I learned to forget my former fear.”

She pursued the same course with a frog and skeleton. Doubtless her mother had studied the child's character ; but it is an example to be by no means blindly followed, for it is very certain that the effect on some children would have been the increase rather than the cure of these childish and unaccountable antipathies.

But, after all, the best cure for vain fears is the true fear of God, which is also the beginning of wisdom. Those who fear him have nothing else to fear, either in this world, or in the world to come.

“Look not mournfully into the past ; it comes not back again : wisely improve the present, it is thine ; go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart, trusting in thy God.”—*Longfellow*.

“No greater harm is done to Christendom, than by the neglect of children ; therefore, to advance the cause of Christ, we must begin with them.”—*Martin Luther*.

“Good women make good men, and good mothers make both.”

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE GIFTS OF FAITH AND SUFFERING, WITH CONFLICT.

A Sermon

Preached on Tuesday Evening, August 5th, 1862,

BY THE REV. J. J. WEST, M.A.,

(Rector of Winchelsea, Sussex,)

IN THE CHURCH OF ST. BARNABAS, KING SQUARE, LONDON.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear in me."—*PHIL. I. 29, 30.*

It is said by the apostle, in one of his other epistles, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost;" and it was the solemn statement to a lost soul in hell, "And beside all this, between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed, so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." It is only the Election of Grace (when taught) who can receive and understand the gospel, and as I said before, it is the solemn statement of the apostle Paul, speaking by the immediate command of the Holy Ghost,—"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

This text has been applied to my own heart with some power, in that state of exercise which every pastor must feel when he is anxious to have a text sent to him, on which to preach to the people who come to hear him. Now we read in this passage, that there are *two* gifts—the gift of faith, and the gift of suffering—and these gifts are the positive gifts of God himself. These words are addressed to the church of God at Philippi. Here is the address at the opening of the epistle:—"To all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons"—to no other persons there. And God alone can give faith to any man.

Now there are three points I would take as the subjects for speaking on to you "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, (or on account of Christ), not only to BELIEVE ON HIM," that is the first gift, Faith.—Secondly, the gift of suffering or trial or temptation under the cross.—And then thirdly, that which, as far as I understand the experience of the people of God, tests the thing in your soul and mine—"HAVING THE SAME CONFLICT."

In the first hymn that we sung we had these words:

"Faith is a precious gift,
Where e'er it is bestowed,
It boasts of a celestial birth,
And is the gift of God."

The Family Preacher. October, 1862.

Man has no power to get Faith of himself. Let us, my hearers distinctly mark Jehovah's sovereignty. God is a *sovereign*! "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doeth according to his will amongst the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?" We read in the epistle to the Ephesians, "By *grace* are ye saved," *that is done*. "By *grace* are ye saved through faith," which faith is the consequence of *grace*. The church was saved before all worlds by grace. Men make great mistakes here. Arminianism is in dreadful error and heresy! Give God the glory, my brother—grace saved, grace predestinated every man whom God chose to be saved. FAITH is given as the consequence of THAT SALVATION, and so the apostle, in his second epistle to Timothy, has this remarkable passage, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I ask you to mark the position of each word there. "Who hath saved us," comes *first*, and *then*, "called us." Not the calling first, and saving afterwards, but the effectual call as the consequence of having been everlastingly saved in Christ, before all worlds; according to that master passage in the opening of the Ephesian Epistle, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy, and without blame before him,"—not because we were in ourselves holier than others! The church in herself is no better than the world, my brother, but God makes provision, not only for the safety and salvation of his church, but for her holiness and perfection in his Son," that we should be holy and without blame before him."

What a position for such a sinner as you and I are, to occupy—to be without blame in the presence of a holy, and a sin-bating God. Do you think that you stand so before him? Do you think those words in Solomon's Song can be applied to you: "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee?" "No spot!!" My point here, is FAITH, which is the gift of God. Not only is faith God's gift in the first instance, but every instant, and every hour after, in the experience of the child of God. We have no power to believe from day to day, without his grace commands faith into our hearts. I cannot believe now, in the pulpit, unless God give me grace to trust and to believe in him whom I preach before you. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of the great and glorious Saviour, not only to believe on him"—that is my first point. Are you brought to a simple, child-like trust in him? Do you believe in Jesus Christ to the salvation of your souls? Are you brought away from all and everything that savours of error and heresy, and are you brought to a simple, child-like dependance upon this great and glorious Saviour that I am now feebly attempting so set before you? Do you believe that he has finished the work? and do you *also* believe, that he has finished that work *individually for you*? Do you like to contemplate—it is a vast subject to think upon—do you like to contemplate Christ dying between two thieves? Have you ever contemplated him in that striking position? Have you seen him there, on the middle cross, (if I may so speak) the separator between the church and the world? Do you see those three crosses—the representative of the church in the one thief, and the representative of a non-elect world in the other thief? and do you see the DIVIDER between the two? Do you there see Jesus Christ, separating between the

church and the world? And if, as a minister of the gospel, I do not, in this pulpit now, or in any other which I may occupy, take forth the precious from the vile, I am not as God's mouth amongst you. The word to Jeremiah of old was, "And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth"—and that not simply, my hearers, to distinguish between the church and the world—not simply to discriminate between professor and possessor—but to discriminate between the old Adam and the new man of grace in the new-born child of God.

There are but two families in the world. There are but two divisions of men, and those divisions are marked by the gentle John, in those striking words, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." The children of God receive that grace which bringeth salvation, and the apostle John gives us a description of how the two seeds are distinguished. Listen to me. "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." The point is, are you born of God? It all hangs upon that. That is the evidence here. "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin"—that is, the new man—the new-born principle in the elect child of God never commits sin. Hence, as I shall come to afterwards, the conflict in the believer.

And I cannot conceive a sweeter test of the discipleship of the Son of God, than realizing in our own souls, day by day, painful as it is, a conflict—the battle between flesh and spirit—the battle which the apostle well understood, when he said, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." It has been said, "so that ye cannot do the things that ye would do *naturally*, and so that ye cannot do the things that ye would do *spiritually*." The child of God does not take advantage of God's favour. He hates the antinomian heresy. He does not say, "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound." But there is the conflict. Grace defends him so, that he is not allowed to get into the commission of sin, as he otherwise would do—so that he cannot do the things that he would otherwise do *naturally*. Neither can he do the things that he would do *spiritually*. Hence the conflict. Can you always do so? I speak to the believer. You know you cannot. Can you always pray? Can you always believe? No, you cannot! Can you always trust God? No; he leaves you often to try you, that you may know what is in your own heart. What did he do to Hezekiah? Left him to try and to humble him. And this is so with all his family. There is a striking passage in the 104th Psalm, which exactly states this:—"That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good." But now mark, "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth." These are the ups and downs of the church. God hides his face and I am troubled. God may shut me up in the pulpit now, and I shall not be able to preach the Word, but if he sets my tongue free, you will find that there has been a prophet among you. We are entirely in the hands of our covenant God. We can do nothing in or by ourselves. "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. My hearers, I am jealous for the honor of my eternal and glorious Master, and I insist upon the truth,

that we are nothing, and have nothing, and can do nothing, and that faith is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And mark, that FAITH is the consequence of GRACE!! Wherever grace has saved a man, that man must believe in Jesus to the *experimental* saving of his soul. The soul is saved eternally, but there must be the experience of it in time, and hence, faith is the gift of God.

Well, then, you know, my hearers, there is the trial of faith, and the apostle says, "The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." You must be put into the fire to be tried. It is not every one who merely professes a really orthodox creed that has got grace in his heart. Oh no. Many a hypocrite has done that; but the faith which is the gift of God must be *tried*. The apostle Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also, with exceeding joy." "When his glory shall be revealed." Well, then, come, poor sinner—if there is one here trembling in little faith—and little faith is as much the gift of God as great faith—Dr. Hawker said, in illustration of the things I advance, that "A drop of dew is as really water as the vast and boundless ocean." A drop of dew upon a blade of grass is as really water as the great ocean itself, and little faith, that trembles at the feet of the Saviour in the broken heart of some doubting, fearing, and trembling child of God, is as really the gift of God, as when Thomas said, "My Lord, and my God." That is faith. But it is given you, and you cannot get it in any other way. None of your Arminianism; none of your free will; none of your independance. Faith is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Secondly, "not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake." Oh! you must not put away the suffering. It is not an easy path to heaven. But one word before I pass on. Peter has this striking word: "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be BROUGHT unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Will you mark that sweet word—"hope to the end for the grace that is to be *brought* unto you." It "is to be *brought* unto you. "The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men." The command here is, "Hope to the end"—go on hoping, tried believer! You have little faith—go on hoping to the end for that grace which is to be brought—which "is to be *brought* unto you." It must come, but when? "At the revelation of Jesus Christ," and not till then. I do not here speak of his coming again, but when he appears manifestively by grace to you—when he reveals himself as a pardoning God, through his love and blood! "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." At the experimental appearing of Jesus Christ. It may be so now, (as I preach to you), that grace may be brought to you through my tongue, I may be the instrument, (God grant that I may be so). You may have been praying and waiting at Bethesda's pool for eight-and-thirty years for the grace that you hope for; and you may have been hoping year after year, and now, that grace, through my feeble instrumentality (it may be) is to be brought to you. You cannot go to it, it is to be brought to you, at the revelation of Jesus Christ, and if he appears, that

is all you want. When the day-star rises in your heart, that sets all straight and right.

Well, now, as to the second point. Here is a divine gift. The faith of some people is very easy. The Arminian has got a sort of faith; and "the devils also believe and tremble." "I know thee, who thou art, the holy one of God." A notional faith is not the faith of God's elect. There are two faiths, and there are two hopes. "What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" He may gain a name. He may gain a place. He may gain the approbation of his fellow men. But "what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?" "Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" My hearers, the hope that saves, is the hope shed abroad in the heart, which the apostle speaks of—"the hope shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." And there are two repentances spoken of in the Bible. There is the repentance of Judas Iscariot, who, as the Word graphically says, "repented himself," and "went and hanged himself." But there is the repentance of Peter, which caused the broken-hearted apostle to go out bewailing his sin, and weeping bitterly. *That* is gospel repentance.

But I must pass on. The second gift is the gift of suffering. The path of the child of God is a path of trouble. We read, "In the world ye"—that is the Church—"shall have tribulation." If there is no trouble there is no evidence that you are in the possession of GRACE. Again we are told, "confirming the souls of the disciples exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The child of God must suffer. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on HIM but also to suffer for HIS sake." The Psalmist says of the world, that "they are not in trouble as other folk, neither are they plagued like other men," and in Zechariah "I will bring the third part through the fire;" (it shall not be burned up in the fire) I will bring it "through" it. I wonder how many persons whom I address can sympathise with me in this experience—to be in the fire. I know it well or I could not preach it; for as a valued brother says, "It is your trouble and my trouble that forces us to preach to the people of God. Trouble makes us preach, and we could not preach if we had not trouble." Oh, as I was saying to a friend to-day, and as I said publicly the other day from my own pulpit, "So then death worketh in us, but life in you." That makes an experimental minister! That makes a preacher. That makes a man a blessing to the people of God—when death works in us—it is hard work my hearers and I know it—but life in you. You get a benefit from the suffering, sorrow, trial, temptation, and affliction, which we suffer for the sake of in our blessed Lord. This the best study for the pulpit. This is the best preparation; and so we are able to come forth from time to time before the people of God with profit. "Then I spake unto them of the captivity (that is the Church) all the things that the Lord had showed me." Oh, I hope I speak to captives here. I know what captivity is. I know what it is to say "I am shut up and cannot come forth," and that has schooled me better than mere carnal education; that has taught me to speak to them of the captivity "all the things that the Lord hath showed me." So you see:—

"You share the blessings we obtain."

But it is hard work with us often. I believe that a minister of the gospel to be of any use to the people of God—and they are the only people whom I wish to serve—“must drink of the brook in the way,”—that he must in some degree or other understand and participate in all the temptations and trials that the people are to undergo to whom he is to be made a useful messenger. This is hard work, and I cannot imagine a grander argument for me to use to you than this, when I say emphatically “Brethren pray for us;”—for every sent—every God-appointed preacher of the gospel. “Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on HIM, but also to suffer for HIS sake.” Here is the sympathy of faith and here is the sympathy of suffering.

Thirdly, my hearers—“having the same conflict.” Oh, we have all the same conflict. We will take the apostle's own experience. He says “having the same conflict which ye saw in me and now hear in me.” We will read his own experience. “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.” That was Paul's experience. “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of the mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” There are the two laws. But mark,—“Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” Is it not this same conflict that every Christian is in day by day and hour by hour? How often have I said with him, “Oh wretched man that I am!” But that makes me preach. That is the education that makes a minister. Human learning, (much as we value it in its place—and it is well to keep *things* as well as *people* in their proper places)—much as we value human learning—the thing that teaches a man the scholarship of the gospel—is the understanding of conflict and of suffering. “Oh wretched man!” Here was Gamaliel's favorite pupil—the great scholar—taught now in the school of God, and taught by the “same conflict” that the Christian suffers day by day, and brought to exclaim, “Oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” This is in allusion probably to the old punishment and custom of chaining up the body of the slain man to the assassin. I have not time to enter into that now, but just as that corpse was chained up to the convicted and condemned assassin, so sin is chained up to you and me, and we shall never get quit of it till we are in our coffins. But mark the distinction!! There may be some enemies here—there may be some here who would delight to make me an offender for a word, but my hearer take heed, how you bear false witness! I have had enemies in town and country before this, but if there be any now here take heed! The Church cannot bear to live in sin, but sin lives in the Church. Sin is her plague spot. Sin is her burden. Sin is the thing that makes her detest herself. “Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death”—and now the spring rises up, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord; so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God but with the flesh the law of sin.” Then comes the statement—“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” This is freedom. “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.” Oh what a God ours is! He sent his Son, because of the weakness of the flesh—and what the flesh could not do, he sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. My hearers, the **CONFLICT** is the true test of the discipleship of the cross, and is it not a mercy to read, as we read in the epistle to the Hebrews, the striking words, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. For verily he taketh not hold of angels; but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold; wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins

of the people, for"—now hear this—"in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." And in the conflict between flesh and spirit, (you know that passage in Solomon's Song), "Return, return, oh Shulamite, that we may look upon thee." This is a dialogue between Jehovah and the Shulamite, and she says, "What will ye see in the Shulamite?" God replies, "As it were the company of two armies"—that is flesh and the spirit. It is the company of these two armies that generates the conflict. The unregenerate man cannot have conflict. He has a conscience, but that is not the work of grace in him. No man can have a conflict, except a new-born man. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things become new." And oh, how painful the conflict is! "I find then a law that when I would do good evil is present with me; for I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

Now my hearers what do you and I understand of these great realities? What do you and I understand of believing in the Son of God, of suffering for his sake? Does your Christianity cost you anything? Look at David. I say at home often and I may say the same thing to you, for I do not preach one gospel there and another here—What would you say of a tradesman who sold two different articles under the plea of selling the same thing? Oh no. The Gospel in the country and the gospel in the city of London, must be the same. What does your Christianity cost you? David was tried, "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."

How is it in your families? "A man's foes are they of his own household." I could show you people amongst my own home charge who know that in the full experience of it, and they have to suffer as well as to believe.

"Oh what a narrow, narrow path,
Is that which leads to life."

"I will take you one of a city and two of a family"—look at the sovereignty. Not two of a city and one of a family, but "I will take you one of a city and two of a family, and bring you to Zion." And another thing, "I will give you pastors after mine own heart who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." May God have given you one this evening in the feeble instrument in the pulpit before you.

There is no doubt that the persons to whom Paul addressed these words are safe in heaven. There is no doubt that the work had been begun in them, and when once the work is begun nothing can stop it. Once in grace, never out of it—there may be dark seasons, but grace once given is for ever! "He will give grace and glory." "The Lord will give grace and glory, no good will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "Being confident of this very thing that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." And when our Lord himself was asked by scoffers and scorners, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God, Jesus answered and said unto them, "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

Thus then my hearers, faith is the gift—suffering is the gift of God! Look at our Lord—"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He is not described as a man of fortune and rank and talent, but the emphatic description of my glorious Master is this—"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." And I think it is not too trifling a subject to mark here that when our Lord made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem of old, he rode upon the animal that still bears the mark of the cross upon its shoulder.—"No cross, no crown;" and, as a brother minister of mine says, "Cross bearers shall be crown wearers." Unto you my hearers—to every elect man in this church—to every elect woman in this house of prayer—whether you are now in the secret or whether you are not—the grace of God shall be given to you at the set time of favor. And you who have had these things made clear to you, hear the message of your sovereign Jehovah—"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, having the same conflict which ye saw in me and now hear in me." Here is

the union, the emphatic tie between the poor and the despised people of God. It is said in the written word, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people." This is the mark. They are all afflicted and they are all poor; and if they are not afflicted—if they are not tried—they have no solid evidence of having part or share in the matter. "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they SHALL trust in the name of the Lord."

My hearers, may God bless my feeble preaching amongst you. May you know the reality of this in your souls. May you be made by grace to believe. May you by the same grace patiently endure the cross, "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God," when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him. Look at this black cloth round the pulpit, in mourning for Mrs. Ward. Now I believe that the man who feels his sins has no occasion to be warned about death. If you feel your sin and if you struggle to realize your interest in Christ, you want no admonition from me to prepare to die,

"Conscience accuses from *within*,
And others from *without*;
I feel my soul the sink of sin,
And this produces doubt."

And if you are exercised to get at your interest in Christ you will be looking for the blessed hope. You will be realizing Peter's word, "Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"—when Christ is revealed in your heart as your Saviour—when you are made to say feelingly as Thomas was, "My Lord and my God,"—and "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking VENGEANCE on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ—"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among you was believed,) in that day."—2 Thess. i. 9, 10. My hearers, may this solemn subject drop into your souls. May this word be applied with power. May the Holy Ghost do what I cannot do—APPLY THIS word to your souls, that you may leave this house of God realizing in your own souls that you have part in this great passage I have been attempting to speak upon—"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on HIM, but also to suffer for HIS sake; HAVING THE SAME CONFLICT which ye saw in me and now hear in me."

May God bless the gospel through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sketches and Essays.

MAKING PROVISION FOR CHILDREN.

No parent can be indifferent to the welfare of his children. To wish them prosperity and happiness after he has left the world, is as natural as to wish them present blessings. And it is as laudable for him, if he has the means, to provide for wants which may arise after his decease, as for those which exist now.

But the question to be settled is, how much money, in the way of patrimony, is for a child's good? And still further, whether a parent is bound to consider only the interest of his child in the disposition of his property? The child, doubtless, has the first claim upon his estate, but there may be other claims justly entitled to his consideration. One's duty, in the disbursement of his property, like his influence and affection, should begin with those nearest his heart, and spread out like concentric circles, to be guided only by good sense.

A child ought to inherit no more money than will be necessary to stimulate his energies, and give him the means of success, without tempting him to indolence and dissipation. To turn a son off with nothing but his hands to make his way in the world, when one has the means of giving him enough to make a fair beginning, would be as unwise as it would be unkind. For although the severity of discipline in some instances would be advantageous to the son, in giving him self-reliance and enterprise, it would, in many others, expose him to needless hardships. But on the other hand, to pour affluence into the lap of an indulged child, who has known no responsibility, is his most certain ruin.

The maxim that a fortune for a young man is a great *misfortune*, is generally true. It lays before young minds a temptation to idleness which they cannot ordinarily resist. Let the impression be early made, that one is to have a patrimony that will sustain him for life, and the inducement to activity is greatly impaired. Those acts of

The Mother's Magazine. November, 1862.

self-denial so necessary to prepare one for the common trials of life, will not generally be endured. The son grows up under the apprehension that labour and care are works of supererogation. You may tell him he must be industrious in order to keep his property, and secure him against future want, but he does not feel the force of your argument. It has not enough of necessity in it. He never has had care, and never expects to have it. His property seems to him about as certain in its continuance, as the laws of nature.

If property produces this effect upon children, it should be one of the last sources of parental anxiety to secure it for them. The chief anxiety should be to train them aright. Rest not till they are brought to Christ; and, with a good physical, intellectual, and moral education, habits of industry, economy, self-reliance, and generosity, you may send them into the world, followed by your prayers and your counsels, and have but little to fear. If you can add to them a moderate amount of pecuniary aid at their commencement, it will be well. They will then, by the blessing of God, advance moderately and safely in their accumulations. They will find spheres of usefulness, and stations of honour and trust. They will always remember you with affection; they will come to you in the evening of life, to gladden your waning years. As your last days draw near, they will be by your bedside, to cheer your fainting hearts, and administer to your wants. And after they have laid you in the grave, they will come and tread lightly on the turf that covers you, and bless your dust. But give them a fortune without such an education and discipline, and you tempt them to despise and abandon you. Like the Prodigal Son, they may be far away, spending their substance in riotous living, while you are dying among strangers. Says the *Journal of Commerce*, in February, 1849:—"A five dollar Bill of the Fulton Bank passed through our hands yesterday, on the back of which was written, 'This is the last of three thousand dollars left to me by my mother at her decease on the 27th August, 1847. Would to God she had never left it to me, and that I had learned to work, and to have earned my living. I would not now be what I am.'" Says another journal, not long since, "A mother, who had educated her sons to do nothing, and to rely upon their patrimony for support, recently heard from three of them; one was a driver on the Western Canal; one had recently been taken up as a common vagrant, and the third had gone to Auburn, to learn to

make shoes, under the auspices of a keeper." No poor widow should despair of the prosperity of her children, because she has no patrimony to leave them. Let her see to the welfare of their immortal souls, to their education, their habits of industry—and with the blessing of God, they will secure respect and a competency, serving God in their day and generation.

"I heard a man, who had failed in business, and whose furniture was sold by auction, say that when the cradle, and the crib, and the piano went, tears would come, and he had to leave the place to be a man. Now there are thousands of men who have lost their pianos, but who have found better music in the sound of their children's voices and footsteps going cheerfully down with them to poverty, than any harmony of chorded instruments. Oh! how blessed is bankruptcy, when it saves a man's children. I see many men who are bringing up their children as I should bring up mine, if, when they were ten years old, I should lay them on a dissecting table, and cut the sinews of their arms and legs, so that they could neither walk nor use their hands, but only sit still and be fed. Thus rich men put the knife of indolence and luxury to their children's energies, and they grow up fatted, lazy calves, fitted for nothing, at twenty-five, but to drink deep, and squander wide; and the father must be a slave all his life, in order to make beasts of his children. How blessed, then, is the stroke of disaster which sets the children free, and gives them over to the hard, but kind bosom of poverty, who says to them, "Work!" and working makes them men."—**BEECHER.**

We hear a great deal about the duty of filial obedience, but who says anything about parental obligations? Neglect of children is a common sin of the times, and not so much among the poor as among the rich. It is not enough to bequeath money to your children. Give them counsel, example, discipline—that is, give them a share of your time.

THE CONVERSION OF CHILDREN.

"As far as my experience goes," says George Muller, in his "Life of Trust," "it appears to me that believers generally have expected too little of *present* fruit upon their labours among children. There has been a hoping that the Lord, some day or other, would own the

instruction which they give to children, and would answer, at some time or other, though after many years only, the prayers which they offer up on their behalf. Now, while such passages as Prov. xxii. 6, Eccles. xi. 1, Gal. vi. 9, 1 Cor. xv. 58, give unto us assurance, not merely respecting everything which we do for the Lord in general, but also respecting bringing up children in the fear of the Lord, in particular, that our labour is not in vain in the Lord; yet we have to guard against abusing such passages, by thinking it a matter of little moment whether we see *present* fruit or not. But, on the contrary, we should give the Lord no rest till we see present fruit; and, therefore, in persevering yet submissive prayer, we should make known our requests unto God. I add, as an encouragement to believers who labour among children, that, during the last two years, seventeen young persons, or children, from the age of eleven-and-a-half to seventeen, have been received into fellowship among us; and that I am looking out now for many more to be converted, and that not merely of the orphans, but of the Sabbath and day-school children. As, in so many respects, we live in remarkable times, so in this respect also, that the Lord is working greatly among the children in many places.

KIND WORDS TO POOR MOTHERS.*

THIS corrupt nature shows itself, as I have said, as soon as the child begins to notice and to speak; therefore a mother cannot begin too early to try and train up her child in the way it should go, by rooting up that which is evil, and planting in that which is good. Some mothers, I know, think a child of two or three too young to be taught anything—that it is only fit to be the pet and plaything of the rest of the family.

This is a mistake; a child of two years old (ay, of a few months) may be obedient or disobedient, affectionate and gentle or cross and selfish, and therefore may be trained or taught to do that which is right. A child of three or four can understand anything that is said to it, and by that age should have been well trained in little obedient acts, and obedience is the beginning of everything good in a child. Nothing can be done, until a child understands that it is to do exactly what it is told to do without question or murmur. Remember that

* John F. Shaw and Co., 48, Paternoster Row, and at 27, Southampton Row.

disobedience was the first sin that was ever committed, and be very careful to begin early to train your children up in habits of perfect obedience. It will save more trouble than you can fancy, both for yourself and your children now and in after life. To get this obedience a mother need not be cross or rough to her child; she need not snatch its arm, or bawl to it, and treat it as she would not treat a kitten or a puppy.

She may tell the child kindly to do this or that, and if she is not obeyed, let her repeat the order, and, if necessary, kindly make the child do what it is told to do.

This must be done without losing the temper. No mother should ever be seen by her children in a passion. Gentleness and firmness can go well together, and if they are shown on a few occasions will soon let a child see that the mother means to be obeyed. Children at a very early age are sharp enough to see whether a mother means what she says.

It is a sad thing for a woman to say to her child, "Do this or that," and then, if she be not obeyed, to say no more, but let the child go on doing as it likes. Every time a mother does this, she loses power over her child, and the child loses respect for its mother.

Let a mother be very careful not to threaten to punish a child unless she intends to do so. Some women say to a child, "If you don't do that I will whip you," or "I will put you in the corner," but do not carry out the threat, either from mistaken fondness, or laziness, or the dread of a long cry or a fit of naughtiness; so that the threat has no effect at all, the child gets to know that its mother will not punish it, though she says she will; and so it goes on in disobedience. No woman likes to punish a child, yet if a mother has once said she will do so, let no feelings of her own make her break her word; for punishment does good in two ways; first, in letting the child see that disobedience brings sorrow and punishment; and, second, in making it certain that its mother's words is to be believed. In teaching a child obedience, you are "training it up in the way it should go."

"Honour thy father and mother," is one of God's commandments, and the first commandment with promise; and though you may teach your child to repeat these words, unless you make it fulfil the command by obedience to yourself, no blessing can follow.

GAIN.

Swiftly the moments fly
 That bring the crisis near,
 When every one must die,
 And at God's bar appear ;
 Lord, make it to our conscience plain,
 Our death will be eternal gain.

Thy Word's a solemn light,
 It shows the downward road ;
 It teaches who are right,
 And who are foes to God ;
 It tells, in language clear and plain,
 Whose death will be eternal gain.

The man that lives in sin,
 Or weaves the cobweb vest,
 Would wash the Ethiop clean,
 Or without Christ can rest :
 For such to die, 'tis truly plain,
 Will never be a moment's gain.

The man that feels his load,
 And flies to mercy's throne,
 Believes in sprinkled blood,
 And rests on Christ alone ;
 For Him to die, indeed, 'tis plain,
 Will be an everlasting gain.

The man who treads the road—
 The tribulative way—
 Where enemies to God
 Oppose him every day ;
 For Him to die, 'tis clear and plain,
 Will be an everlasting gain.

The soul that trusts the Cross,
 Yet pants for holiness,
 Counts earthly things but dross,
 If Jesus do but bless ;
 For him to die, 'tis clear and plain,
 Will be an everlasting gain.

He'll gain a crown of light ;
 A palm ; a harp of gold ;
 A robe surpassing bright ;
 A place in glory's fold :
 A throne on which with Christ to reign ;
 For him to die, indeed, is gain.

Great leader of the flock !
 Thy sacred witness give !
 That we are on the rock,
 And shall for ever live :
 O ! make it in our conscience plain,
 For us to die is endless gain.

From the Sower.

CHRISTIAN MOTIVE.

"YE are not your own," said the apostle Paul, "for ye are bought with a price ; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." Again, "I live ; yet not I but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Again, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Once more, "As always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death ; for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

What do these passages, and many others like them, mean ? Familiar as they are, it is to be doubted whether they are generally apprehended in their full significance. They present a standard for the christian life, to the greatness of which the best among us are but imperfectly conformed. And it may be that our falling short of it may arise in part from our not taking pains enough to realize the precise nature of the motives by which it calls us to act and live.

Our christian conduct is the result of many motives,—some higher, some lower, but each allowable in its place, while all are employed by the Spirit that rules within our hearts. Perhaps these motives may be ranged in three classes, which, instead of trying now to

define, we will illustrate by selecting one of the thousand cases in which religious principle is set to work.

The instance we choose shall be that of a pious mother anxiously longing and labouring for the salvation of those who are most dear to her. Let us mark the feelings which awaken her anxiety, and inspire her prayers.

In the first place, it is clear, that some of her thoughts have reference to her own happiness. "What joy to me, if my little ones should be led to Jesus! How can I bear the prospect of one of them being an outcast for ever from His love? And if in acknowledgment of my efforts, and as an answer to my prayers, they should be saved, I shall therein receive a reward that will brighten my heaven throughout eternity. For surely no other 'Well done!' shall have half the sweetness of that to which shall be added—'Because thou hast been faithful to these thy children!'"

Is it wrong to dwell on these thoughts, and to glow with these anticipations? God forbid. He who has taught us to aspire to perfect bliss, and to rejoice in the prospect of salvation and reward, will never bid us blush for the most enrapturing indulgence of the "hope which maketh not ashamed." The motive, then, is right, and lofty; but, as we shall see, it is not the highest.

For there are moods of thought in which that mother's spirit rises to a still higher atmosphere, and, in care for others, entirely forgets itself. Her language is not now, "What joy to me!" but, "What a blessing to my children!" In the thought of their bliss, her own for the moment is forgotten; and the ear of hope forgets even to wait for the welcome that shall reward a mother's faithful service, so intent is it to catch the greetings which shall hail her sons and daughters as "blessed of the father!"

This, we say, is a higher and grander mood of feeling than that which dwells upon merely personal joy and bliss. The self-forgetting, self-renouncing spirit ranks among the highest manifestations of the christian life, and places us near to Him whose work of love was prompted by compassion for the lost, and who, in their deliverance and final blessedness, "shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

But in the Saviour's heart there was one motive yet higher than this. The joy that was set before him was much—the triumph of love in the salvation of souls was much; but there was one thing

beyond all. This was the **GLORY OF THE FATHER**. And such must be the spirit of those who would truly follow him. That mother will reach the loftiest height of christian principle when she rises above the thought of self, above the thought of her children, and fixes her mind and heart upon her Lord ; desiring, first of all, that he may be honoured. "For thine own sake, great Redeemer, make these children thine ! Let them be saved, that thy will may be done, and thy character honored. Win them as new trophies of thy love. Place them as fresh jewels in thy crown. Let them become on earth and for ever, a part of the vast reflection of thy glory. And help me to train them aright, because it is thy will. Let my chief anxiety be in this, as in all else, to serve the Lord Christ. And while I feel deep anxiety for myself, unutterable tenderness for them, let my first great motive ever be—'The love of Christ constraineth me!'"

On the whole, then,—Regard to our own happiness, even though that happiness be pure and eternal, is **SELF-LOVE**. It may be a very right and noble kind of self-love, as in the case above supposed ; but it is nothing more. Regard for others is **BENEVOLENCE**—a feeling which assumes its purest and most elevated form when it inspires prayer and effort for their salvation. But concern for the glory of God is **RELIGION**, and until our hearts can rise to this, we shall never have attained "unto the perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

We are far from saying that these several motives act upon us distinctly and apart—one influencing us at one time and one at another, their influence is generally intertwined. It is difficult to tell where one begins and another ends, or to trace their separate share in leading us to any course of conduct. The apostle from whom we first quoted, for instance, was filled at one and the same moment with bright anticipations of his own bliss, with anxious desires on behalf of the people to whom he had ministered, and with intense and overmastering zeal for his Master's glory. There is no doubt, however, which feeling was uppermost ; and this is the practical point for ourselves. "Lord what wilt thou have me to do ?" Such was his earliest vow of consecration. And to the latest hour this question remained the motto of his life.

Most converts begin with another enquiry, lower and far less noble, "What shall I do to be saved ?" It is well, indeed, when this great

question is asked with sincerity and earnestness; but it is not well, when the christian never gets beyond. "Man's chiefest end," an old catechism begins, "is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever." The "enjoyment" is put second, not first. Yet to how many hearts is it first! A question of duty, we will suppose is raised. No doubt as to the duty itself. The command is plain and unequivocal. The point is, whether it shall or shall not be performed. And here, strange to say, the disciple demurs. Wherefore? Listen to his plea. "It is non-essential." Non-essential to what? To complete obedience? No, for it is a command. "But it is not essential to salvation. And you know the great thing is to get to heaven." Here is the whole error in a single sentence. The great thing is not "to get to heaven." There is something greater still. And that is, to do the will of God, to serve, and glorify him. Our Christianity will, therefore, be enfeebled and sickly, until we have learned the great lesson, to obey him irrespective of consequences to ourselves.

To live for no higher purpose than to be happy on earth, we justly condemn as selfish. We call it worldliness. And what shall we say of the man who still makes happiness his sole aim, albeit its sphere is transferred from earth to heaven? Must we not (with a modern writer) call his ambition "other-worldliness," and tell him that his self-love, if unconnected with higher principles, differ from the other only in being more subtle and delusive? What should we say of a son who, to a wise and loving father's command, should reply, "I shall certainly not do it, Sir; unless, indeed, you will disinherit me for non-compliance?" And is there ought more noble in the conduct of those professed christians who live and speak as though their only object were to gain the everlasting inheritance, and their great concern to make the cheapest bargain?

In a word we want a Christianity which will start from the principle, that God is to be served first, for his own sake, before any thought of our own advantage—that truth, and devotion, and loving allegiance to our Lord, are greater things than happiness—that being bought with a price, we are not our own—and that

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands our souls, our lives, our all."

S. G. GREEN, B.A.

NOT SIGHS, BUT SMILES.

WHY sigh o'er the cares of the way?
 This vale, though a vale of tears,
 Hath many a sunny spot,
 Here and there, along its years.

Then chase with smiles the dark spell,
 For who'll pretend to deny
 That the laughing face of May
 Charms more than an April sigh?

The skies weep sorely, we know,
 When clouds hang heavy with rain;
 But gleam with joy when the sun
 Breaks forth in brightness again.

The nights may be dark and cold,
 When wintry months are nigh;
 But the golden stars shine forth
 In hosts from the jewelled sky.

And so, methinks, we'll find—
 If we only look aright—
 Though pain and pleasure meet,
 There is less of shadow than light.

Up yonder, where clouds ne'er come,
 Where God and the angels dwell,
 Where cries, from sorrowing earth,
 Go up, his vast cares to swell.

No shadow dares dim the light
 Of his never-failing smile;
 He bears on his holy heart,
 Creation's vast vault the while.

He smiles to think of the bliss
 Stored up for us above;
 His smiles will welcome us there,
 In his banquet-hall of Love.

Ah ! then, at the feast he'll spread,
No care shall 'light on the brow ;
No tears—but *smiles, all smiles*
In God's eternal Now.

Anon.

LYING TO CHILDREN.

THE Rev. Robert Hall had so great an aversion to every species of falsehood and evasion, that he sometimes expressed himself very strongly on the subject. The following is an instance, stated in his life by Dr. Gregory. Once, while he was spending an evening at the house of a friend, a lady, who was there on a visit, retired, that her little girl of four years old might go to bed. She returned in about half an hour, and said to a lady near her, "She is gone to sleep: I put on my nightcap, and lay down by her, and she soon dropped off." Mr. Hall, who overheard this said, "Excuse me, madam, do you wish your child to grow up a liar?" "Oh dear, no, sir; I should be shocked at such a thing." "Then bear with me while I say, you must never act a lie before her: children are very quick observers, and soon learn, that that which assumes to be what it is not, is a lie, whether acted or spoken." This was uttered with a kindness which precluded offence, yet with a seriousness that could not be forgotten.

The importance of truth, without deception, in the management of children, is illustrated by the following anecdote: Two small boys met in the street, and after some minutes spent in conversation, one remarked to the other, that some little thing might be obtained, if he could procure a few pence from his parents. "But," said the other, "I don't need any money to obtain it, for my mother told me I should have it at such a time." "Pooh!" said the first, "my mother has promised me so many times, and I did not get it, and I do not think you will, either. Our mothers only tell us so to get rid of us, and I think it will be so with yours." "What, my mother tell a lie!" exclaimed the little fellow, and immediately left his companion, with a countenance filled with indignation. What a lesson should this afford to all parents, guardians and those who have the care of youth.

DEAR CHILDREN.

BY MRS. HUGH A. KENNEDY.

“And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour with the Lord, and also with men.”—1 Samuel ii. 26.

WE see in this verse the picture of a good and happy child; and why should not our children, every one of them, share in the same character that is here given of Samuel? They all grow on, as he did, by God's blessing; but alas! many do not also increase “in favour with the Lord, and also with men.”

We may learn from the Bible story, what it was that brought this blessing upon Samuel. His mother was a woman of earnest and habitual prayer. She had prayed to God to give her this son, and we cannot doubt that she afterwards offered earnest supplications to God for the child as he lay in her arms, while yet a babe. But she did more than pray for him; she taught him in his earliest years to know God, and to love him. She taught him to be obedient and dutiful to those that were set over him, and to walk uprightly before his God.

From the time her infant was born, Hannah had set him apart for the service of the true God, and from the very first years of his life she devoted herself entirely to the care of preparing him for this service. No pleasure of her own could tempt her to lay aside this loved and holy task. She gave up the festive excursion to Shiloh, in which she could then so joyfully have taken part, and while the rest of the family went their way to eat and drink, and rejoice together before the Lord, she remained at home, to bestow all her attention on her tender infant.

In the verse that heads this little paper, we see what came of this tender, prayerful, guiding of the child, during his infant years. His mother having given him up to the service of the tabernacle, was obliged, while her son was still very young, to leave him under the care of Eli whose own family had become so terrible an example of the ill effects of their father's weak indulgence. He had allowed them to follow their own wills, and they had grown up profane in the sight of God, and hateful in the eyes of the people.

The two families thus brought in contrast before us, afford a striking lesson to every parent. Eli indulged his sons; he allowed

them to follow unchecked, the bent of their natural evil dispositions, and they grew up wicked exceedingly. Their sins brought down the wrath of God on their own heads, and on that of their weak and guilty father. Samuel, on the other hand, while still a child, increased daily in favour with God and man. The training of the two was different, and the consequences were different.

The indulgence of Eli was followed by the self-indulgence and wickedness of his sons. The discipline that must have been used to guide Samuel, resulted in his obedience and ready self-denial.

Let us look on both these pictures, and choose for ourselves. There is first, the old man, whose sinfully feeble purpose, and mistaken kindness to his children, has led his sons into the indulgence of every vice. Their shame and disgrace now falls heavily upon the broken-hearted father, and the whole family is involved in ruin.

But, on the other hand, we see a young child growing in favour, both with God and man. His ready obedience to Eli, and the good feeling shewn by him towards his kind old preceptor, make us wish that our sons might in all ways resemble him.

The rule is the same now, as it was then, Train a child with prayer and good purpose for the service of God, and he will walk in his ways. Neglect, and indulge your child in sin and wilfulness, and he will as assuredly bring upon you the ruin and misery that fell upon Eli and his family.

TRAINING, THE APPRENTICESHIP OF LIFE.

BY MRS. HUGH A. KENNEDY.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."—Proverbs xxii. 6.

WHEN we speak of training, we mean influencing the bent or nature of any thing, so as to make it go in a way that it would not go of its own accord. We train a horse, when we teach him to carry a man, or to draw a cart or carriage. We train a dog, when we teach him to guard our dinner, instead of eating it himself, which he would naturally like to do. To train a plant, we compel its tender branches to bend themselves, and grow in the way in which we fix them. We must take care when we do this, that the plant is held firmly in

the direction we wish it to take, and we know that it will then of a surety of itself spread in that direction. In the same way must we strive, early, to set our children's feet firmly in the right road. While they are young, and tender, and we can do what we like with them, we must, with God's help, compel them to walk in His straight path.

The plant we wish to train, is strongly fastened according to our will, either with nails to a wall, or with bands to a stake. But what bands and ties can we use with our little children? We can bind them, when young, with bands that will strengthen upon them as they grow older; I mean the bands of good habits. We all know it is hard to break off bad habits, and thank God it is the same with good ones; when once taken up they are not easily laid aside. The good habits of religious observance, of obedience, of honesty, and of industry, when they are early enforced upon a little child, will ensure with God's promised blessing, that the man, when he grows up, shall be obedient to God and his laws, honest towards his neighbour, and diligent in the duties of his station.

I remember, when I was a little girl, reading a story about Mr. Makegood, who was called in when the children cried, and were naughty; but I do not think a visitor of this kind would be of much use, because it is not a punishment now and then when he is very naughty, that will make a child permanently good. The steady and constant pressure of habit and discipline will alone do this.

The word which Solomon himself uses in his own language, shows us that we must guide a child in the same way that a master does an apprentice. He will first show the apprentice how the work is to be done, and then put him in the way of learning to do it himself. He will teach him the easy parts first, and will make him work at them diligently till he has become skilful: then, by degrees, he will let him learn what is more difficult, and practice that, till he is expert in every part of the occupation.

In the same way, a good and careful mother will set before her child first, the easy but useful lesson, "do as you are bid;" and when he is getting to know that, she will teach him not to cry for what he wants, by never giving him any thing that he cries for. She thus begins his apprenticeship to life by teaching him to give up his will to hers, and to bear patiently his little crosses.

BIG WORDS AND SMALL IDEAS.

Big words are great favourites with people of small ideas and weak conceptions. They are often employed by men of mind, when they wish to use language that may best conceal their thoughts. With few exceptions, however, illiterate and half-educated persons use more 'big words' than people of thorough education.

It is a very common but very egregious mistake, to suppose that long words are more genteel than short ones—just as the same sort of people imagine high colours and flashy figures improve the style of dress. They are the kind of folks who don't begin, but always 'commence.' They don't live but 'reside.' They don't go to bed, but mysteriously 'retire.' They don't eat and drink, but 'partake of refreshments.' They are never sick, but 'extremely indisposed.' And, instead of dying at last, they 'decease.'

The strength of the English language is in the short words—chiefly monosyllables of Saxon derivation; and people who are in earnest seldom use any other. Love, hate, anger, grief, joy, express themselves in short words and direct sentences; while cunning falsehood and affectation delight in what Horace calls *verba sesquipedalia*—words a 'foot and a half long.'

YOUTH AND OLD AGE.

A VENERABLE old minister, lodging at the house of a pious friend, observed the mother teaching some short prayers and hymns to her children. "Madam," said he, "your instructions may be of far more importance than you are aware: my mother taught me a little hymn when a child, and it is of use to me to this day. I never close my eyes to rest, without first saying—

" Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take."

WHATEVER you think proper to grant a child, let it be granted at the first word, without entreaty or prayer; and, above all, without making any conditions. Grant with pleasure, but refuse with reluctance, but let your refusal be irrevocable; let not importunity shake your resolution; let the participle "no," when once pronounced, be a wall of brass, which a child, after he has tried his strength against it half-a-dozen times, shall never more endeavour to shake.—*British Workman*.

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

THE BELIEVER'S TRUE DEFENCE.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JAN. 26TH, 1862.

BY THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus."—PHIL. iv. 7.

THE expressions here used by the apostle, and which we render "keep," is much stronger in the original than in the translation. It is a military term, and denotes occupancy by aggression. This, perhaps, may sound somewhat strange. Had the apostle spoken of the power of God, or of the Spirit of God, you might have expected some such result as he affirms, but you do not, it may be, see how the peace of God is to act as a kind of military force, strengthening the heart and mind, so that temptation is withstood. The difficulty is probably increased by the almost extreme terms by which this peace is defined—a peace which passeth understanding; for this peace, apparently making the cause unintelligible, leaves us but little power of perceiving its connection with the effect. Here, then, are important and profitable subjects for thought. In the first place, let us notice what that peace of God is, which is described as passing all understanding, and, secondly, let us endeavour to determine what there is in this peace to keep the heart and mind, through Jesus Christ.

You will all remember that in one of our Lord's parting discourses, with his
The Family Preacher. November, 1862.

disciples, he solemnly bequeathed peace as his legacy to his Church. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." You must observe that it was his own peace—"my peace"—which the dying Saviour promised to bestow; and it is probably with reference to this promise that one of the petitions in our Litany runs thus—"Oh, Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace." And the peace of Christ—the peace which was enjoyed by Christ, and left by him to his followers, was not a peace resulting from a sense of sin forgiven, for "He had done no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." It must have differed from the peace of reconciliation to God, inasmuch as there never had been enmity between the Father and the Son, but the Man Christ Jesus had always loved with a perfect love—obeyed with a perfect obedience, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Therefore we can only understand by "the peace of Christ" the thorough harmony there was between his own will and the divine—his perfect and cheerful acquiescence in every appointment of the Father—his undeviating confidence in his protection, and his imperturbable assurance of his love.

In some respects the peace attainable by ourselves must differ from that enjoyed by the Saviour, inasmuch as we have actually to pass from a state of enmity to a state of reconciliation. Still, since Christ bequeathed his own peace to the Church, the points of resemblance, we may believe, are more numerous than the points of distinction. Into the peace which Christians may look for, there will necessarily enter a sense of forgiveness—a consciousness that God, of his free and undeserved mercy, has blotted out their transgressions, and placed to their account the obedience of his Son, and of this element, as we have said, there could not have been aught in the peace of the Redeemer. But assuredly there will enter into the Christian's peace, that harmony with the divine will, that acquiescence in the divine dealings, that confidence in the divine protection, and that assurance in the divine love, which must have composed the peace of Christ; for these belong not to the Saviour, as he differed from ourselves, but rather as he was a man, living the life of faith in the midst of trials and temptations. And hence we may conclude that the peace which is spoken of in our text, is the peace of God—a peace that is communicated or imparted by God—and which must also be the peace which Christ bequeathed to his Church; that besides the consciousness of the pardon of sin, it will involve a serene dependance on our heavenly Father, an unquestioning admission of the wisdom, and justice, and goodness of his every dealing, and a firm hope and expectation of everlasting happiness.

But are we not over bold in attempting to define or describe this peace? The apostle speaks of it as a "peace that passeth all understanding;" and, if it pass all understanding, it must not less certainly pass all language. And undoubtedly it does. It is not to be expressed when felt, neither when felt is it to be understood—not understood, inasmuch as it is wrought into the mind by the Spirit of God, whose operations are secret, and known only by their results—not to be understood, because there will always be a height and depth defying human search, in the fact that such beings as ourselves can be raised into communion

with the Divine—that with our long and wilful alienation there could yet be arrangements for permanent harmony betwixt man and his Maker—not to be understood, inasmuch as there is a worth in this peace which the highest intelligence cannot compass. It were to measure eternity, to comprehend infinity, to gauge the dimensions of this gift of God.

And yet it is no mythical thing. It is, saith the apostle, designed to keep and garrison the heart and the mind, so that at the very moment of using an expression which might seem to countenance those who would bring mysticism into religion, and resolve it into a high and incommunicable science, the apostle shows most clearly that he had no idea of any parallel that did not bear an application. If he speaks of "peace which passeth all understanding," he does not leave you to think it is something in the clouds, that is only to be reached by imagination, and that needs the wand of some spiritual astronomer. He clothes it in a dress, and arms it with weapons of warfare, and places it amid the difficulties and struggles of every day life. So, then, if the peace of God passeth all understanding, it is not as being unintelligible in its nature and inscrutable in its effects; it is only as being of such high origin, such paramount energy, that even thought must fail to comprehend and measure it. Therefore we do not forget to lay before you some of the signs by which you may know whether this peace is yours, and to urge you to examine whether you possess it.

I may tell you that if the peace of God reign in your hearts, you will have a consciousness that sin is forgiven, an ever growing earnestness of mind after holiness, a tranquillity undisturbed by the calamities of life, a hope superior to the terrors of death. Judge of yourselves whether you have attained to this peace. If you are in doubt as to the pardon of your sin, or unduly agitated in seasons of affliction, and disquieted in the prospect of eternity, examine what the New Testament says of the spiritual help derived by the Christian—of the victories he may achieve—nay, which are expected from him as from one who has loyalty to God—of his promise of "all things," "whether life or death, or things present, or things to come"—of the hopes he may cherish, of the pleasures he may enjoy. And when you have examined all this, then, in your own condition, your advances in holiness, your appropriation of privileges with what you read of the design of Christianity, you may perhaps find cause to question whether the gospel system have wrought out its tendencies in yourself, if the world, the flesh, and the devil be but feebly resisted, if victory be not the habit, and defeat the exception, if there be no decided preference of invisible things to visible, if you do not find your chief delight in God, and if your experience of his consolations do not fortify you against the worst forms of affliction. And let no man think it a necessary effect of the infirmity of his nature, or the difficulties of his condition, that he makes little way towards perfection. Rather let him fear that his not reaching the privileges, proves that he is not obeying the precepts of Christianity. And certainly such an one as we have thus described, cannot say that the privileges are his, for he cannot say that that half-and-half temper and wavering mind answer to what St. Paul gives us as the portion of a Christian—the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.

And then let us examine the connection between this peace, and the keeping of the heart and mind attributed to it, by St. Paul. To keep the mind of the Christian from the assaults made on the understanding, by sceptical objections or insinuations—to keep the heart of the Christian from the assaults made on his affections, by the world and worldly things—we hope to show that, in both these cases, the peace of God is adequate to the result. As to the sceptical assaults on the mind, you must carefully distinguish between the aggressive and defensive weapons of a Christian—between the arguments with which he may attempt to beat down the infidelity of another, and those which may serve to keep off infidelity from himself. What may be very efficacious, and conforming, and strengthening to the faith of the believer, may not be capable of being woven into reasoning, and being brought to bear on the unbeliever. The possession of true peace by the believer, his sense of God's favour, his assurance of pardon, his firm hope of immortality—these are touching and infallible evidence to himself that the Bible is God's Word, and that Christ is indeed the appointed Saviour of mankind; but manifestly they are not evidence which he can use, were he arguing with the sceptic, and wishing to make good the vital points of Christianity. He must then betake himself to external evidence—the witness from miracles and prophecy; for his adversary may resolve into mere delusion, that internal evidence on which he lays stress, and, being without its experience, may deny its existence; and if the believer know little or nothing of the external evidence, he will be no match for his opponent, and need not expect to undermine his scepticism. But would he, on this account, be an easy prey to the infidel? Is nothing to be expected, but that because unacquainted with the weapons of offensive warfare, he will be found unprepared to maintain a defensive warfare? Is it so? On the contrary, his mind is too well garrisoned to be taken by the assault of an enemy. If he was only a nominal Christian, one who had received the Bible as divine, merely because it was so received by the mass of men around him, and if he had never found the citadel fortified in himself, we know not what power of resistance there would be when plied by subtle arguments and cavils. But we speak now of the man who, though he may not have studied what are properly called evidences, yet has long been acting on the principle that the Bible is divine, obeying its precepts as the precepts of God, and relying on its promises as the promises of God; and we may be sure of such a man, he has not persisted in this course without becoming his own witness to the truth of scripture, inasmuch, as by acting on the precepts, he has found himself within the compass of the promises, and thus has obtained a simple, but irresistible evidence, that the book is true, and, if true, divine.

There is an argument here whose force and persuasiveness can hardly be discredited. It is the argument possessed by a man who has put a theory to the proof, and found it made good, or tried a certain road, and found that it led to the place that he sought. I care not how unable one of our village Christians may be to defend the outworks of Christianity against the bold and cunning assault; he holds in the depths of his own experience an army of faithful witnesses to guard his citadel. In fact, this village Christian, however poor and illiterate,

enjoys that peace of God, which passeth all understanding; and whether or not he is able to state the elements of which it is composed, at least it is sufficient to preserve him from sceptical attack. For he who has this peace has his will moving in harmony with the divine—his affections subordinate to the holy law—his desires renewed—his fears of trouble and death subdued, and his hopes of immortality vigorous and abiding. And is there nothing reasonable in his conclusion that the system which is divine had God for its author? Whence this ennobling and purifying enjoyment? Whence this serenity in the midst of storm? Whence this mastery of rebellious passions? Whence this composure in the prospect of dissolution? Are these traits of falsehood, of doctrines invented by deceivers, of a religion created by enthusiasts, and believed only by the credulous? No; the man in whom the peace of God rests has only to recur to this peace. He needs not the witness which the stars in their courses, or the accumulated occurrences of century upon century, bear to the inspiration of Scripture. He cannot doubt the origin of this peace. The world could not have given it, as the world cannot take it away. Ah! you might wonder, as you saw the uninformed peasant resisting the attacks of the oldest champions of infidelity, manned by sceptical arguments and insinuations, though quite unable to show where lay the fallacy; but all wonder should cease when you knew that the man was a man in whom dwelt the peace of God; for the apostle spake only what will approve itself to every candid inquirer, when he declared of this peace, that though it passeth all understanding, it will keep—it will garrison the mind, the understanding, of all in whom it is actually found.

And now as to keeping, or garrisoning the heart or affections. The attack on the mind, as we have already said, is that made by sceptical doubts or insinuations; the attack on the heart or affections is that made by the world, and worldly things—those objects which address themselves to our natural desires, and solicit our senses or passions. And here it is that we are exposed to the greatest danger. We may pass through life with but little of sceptical assault, but daily, yea, almost hourly, we are addressed through the affections, and are in peril of being overcome by the arms of the world. Here, therefore, it also is that we specially need a defence—such a garrison as will enable us to withstand those temptations to which we are most prone to yield. And we cannot but think that it is not from setting the standard of religion not sufficiently high, that the best of Christians are so often overcome by the world and the devil. If they aimed at what they certainly might attain, seeing it is promised in Scripture—an abiding, elevating sense of God's love and favour, a filial delight in him, and such an anticipation of heavenly joys, as must make them already dwellers in God's presence, they would have comparatively no relish for base and transient pleasures, and would therefore be little moved by solicitations which now too often prevail. If the heart was tenderly and deeply set on religion, they might oppose, as it were, pleasure to pleasure, riches to riches, honour to honour—the pleasure, the riches, the honors, which God alone can bestow, to those which are proffered by the world; and thus would they be attached to the service of piety by the very same ties which now attach others to the service of sin, even the ties of inclination and preference.

The evil is, that with the generality of Christians, there is but little of felt delight in religion. They have no actual joy in believing—no such communion with God and with heaven, as ministers to them a present and an exceeding gladness; and therefore, when tempted to indulge a low passion, or pursue vain shadows, they cannot find this peace of God within themselves; they cannot oppose joys more purifying to the proffered good, and bid the tempter depart. It ought not to be thus, and would not be thus, if greater heed were given to religion as a satisfying, pleasurable thing. You may remember that it was said by St. John, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." Not grievous! And, nevertheless, they are commandments which require the denial of our strongest, natural inclinations—the mortification of the flesh, with its affections and lusts, and the performance of duties from which we instinctively shrink. How, then, can such commands fail to be grievous—how explain the coincidence which the apostle makes out between our loving God, and our keeping his commandments? If we keep the law because we love the lawgiver, the love cannot be abortive; obedience coincides with inclination, and therefore must be a pleasure. And in thorough coincidence with this, St. Paul, in our text, represents the heart or the affections as actually garrisoned by the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.

We have shown you that in this peace are included an abiding sense of divine favour, a firm hope of future happiness, and such earnest of heaven, as would stimulate, whilst they gratify, the Christian. And what power, men and brethren—what power will the world, with its vanities, its braveries, its riches, its pleasures, have over an individual in whom the peace of God reigns? What is it to him that there are petty distinctions for which the ambitious struggle, perilous possessions for which the covetous toil, and base gratifications which the very beasts enjoy in common with man? What is it to him that in the scene where he has been appointed to pass a few probationary years, there are cold shadows, splendid cheats—phantoms woven by the Prince of the Power of the air to draw aside the unstable, and leave them to destruction? Nay, what is it to him that troubles and dangers are multiplied around him—that the world feels an agitation of which all necessarily partake, who are fastened to it in heart and affection? He has tasted of celestial bliss, and the earth's best pleasures to him seem flat and insipid. He has an incorruptible crown, and can look with holy disdain on the splendour of courts, or the pageantry of greatness. He has a constant dependance on the guardianship of the Almighty, and therefore, though the foundations of the earth be removed, yet will his heart be fixed, trusting on the Lord. Do we overstate the peace of which our text speaks? Nay, it would not pass all understanding, if it were not made as positive, as elevating, as sustaining as we have described it. Let a man acquire this peace and he is armed against a world, with all its vanities and pleasures. The world can offer no pleasure of which he has not a greater, nor menace him with any danger of which he has not a remedy. Oh, let a man be in the habit of communion with God—let him have an assured sense of consolation—let him have that present sense of joy of religion, which fellowship with the invisible world will produce, and we know not why, in every

hour of temptation, he cannot manifest something of that superiority which was conspicuous in Christ, when assailed by the devil. Place him on a mount, whence he may survey all the glittering spectacle of the world's grandeur, he ought not to be dazzled; no desire ought to be excited, for he has looked on more glorious things, and more glorious things are his own. Place him in the desert, where he may seem exposed to certain destruction, unless he do something inconsistent with allegiance to God, he ought not to be disheartened. No destruction shall be permitted, for the Word of the Lord is faithful, and that Word has told him he shall never be forsaken. And thus it is the peace of God shall keep him. This peace is literally the garrison which the Holy Spirit pours in the soul, to enable it to defend itself against all the assaults of the Evil One. As when a Christian, thus assaulted through the mind, finds his own experience an effectual argument against scepticism, so, being assaulted in the heart, he finds in his experience an effectual succour against temptation; and thus there is made good to him every letter of the saying, "The peace of God, that passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus."

And, lastly, let it not be thought that in showing you how the peace of God can garrison both the understanding and the affections, we have been describing some rare privilege which the mass of you may hope to attain. It is evident that St. Paul speaks of nothing but what all Christians may possess—what all Christians ought to have. And we would point out to you before we conclude, how, according to the apostle, the peace of God may be obtained. The verse which precedes our text is an exhortation to diligence in prayer—"Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God." Then immediately follows the gracious assurance on which we have discoursed; so that if you would obtain the peace of God, which shall garrison both the heart and mind, you must cultivate a devotional habit—a habit of communion with your Father, which is in heaven. God is ready to bestow great blessings, but then he will be asked for them—importuned for them. This is the condition of bestowment. His own words are, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." We have but to enlarge our desires, and God will increase his supplies.

It is a good thing to be diligent in public worship, but nothing can make up for negligence in private. You may learn and obtain much in church, and therefore "Forsake not the assembling yourselves together." But it is, after all, in your closet, when you have shut to the door, and are alone with your God, that you may expect the best lessons, and the finest glimpses of immortality. Public celebrations can never cease to be interesting and profitable, yet still the nearest and best approach to God, on this earth, is in the deep privacy of devotion. The outer parts of the sanctuary might indeed receive the worshippers of God in bands and companies, but of the Holiest of Holies it was indispensable for the priest to enter it alone. See to it, then, ye who name the name of Christ, that ye be frequent and fervent in private prayer to God; then shall ye gain that peace of God, which passeth all understanding.

Who would be without this peace? Is not the night gathering? Is not the

storm rising Who amongst us would be without this peace? It is but a little while, and then every one of us will be summoned to leave the world and appear before God. And what shall comfort us—what shall sustain us in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment—what, but a full persuasion that our sins are blotted out, and our persons accepted—that God is on our side, and that heaven is our portion? And this persuasion is verily the peace of God—the peace which God bestows on those who wait on him diligently, hearkening to the voice of his Word. Mysteries that there should be any peace which is not to be shaken amid the terrors of destruction and of judgment—mysterious, indeed, but not incomprehensible; for “Thou, O God, hast promised to keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee,” and such a promise holds good—such a promise shall be verified; yea, even amid the taking down of the earthly house of this tabernacle; yea, even when the heavens and the earth shall flee away from the face of him that sitteth on the throne.

Sketches and Essays.

MINISTERIAL RECOLLECTIONS.*

THE VALUE OF A BIBLE ON BOARD A SHIP OF WAR.

VERY many are the instances on record in which it has pleased the God of the Bible to magnify His own word, both in the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, and in building them up in their most holy faith, in the absence of all other means by which he usually accomplishes such important operations on the soul of man. The Word of God is not bound. It can find its way where the living preacher could not risk the danger of lifting up His voice, or where none are to be found to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation. Even under such circumstances as these, the Author of every good and perfect gift can fulfil His own Divine promise, that His "word shall not return unto Him void, but shall prosper in the thing, whereto He sendeth it." Every addition to the number of such cases may serve to encourage those who feel an interest in the free circulation of the word of God, throughout the world. Let them go on casting their bread upon the waters, though they may not know how many days or years may run their course before it is found again.

There was a young man in the neighbourhood of the parish in which I formerly resided, who, from the frowardness of his ways, and the working of those sad evils which too often prevail in the hearts of unconverted youth, and break forth in all the wildness of unmanageable passions, was the cause of much disquietude to his relatives and friends. He was respectably connected, and might have been comfortably settled in life, had he been disposed to submit himself to those restraints and industrious pursuits which were necessary preparations for such prospects. But, like too many others, he was impatient of control, and at length there appeared to be nothing better to be done for him, than to let him follow out a determination which he seemed to have formed, to go to sea. His

* Wertheim, Macintosh, and Hunt, 24, Paternoster Row.

friends acquiesced, and from their having some interest, procured for him an appointment on board a line-of-battle ship, which, from his education, he was very well qualified to fill. It was during the heat of the last long war, which afforded such constant employ for the British Navy, and his ship was kept in active service. For a while he managed to submit himself to the necessary discipline which his situation required, but at length his ungovernable spirit began to manifest itself; and, after various breaches of good order, and a line of conduct which could no longer be borne with, he was reduced to the rank of a common sailor; or, as I believe it is technically termed, "sent before the mast." This was a sad degradation, but there was no remedy, and no escape from a ship of war on active service. It was hard to bear, but it must be borne, with the sad reflection that it was justly merited. Here then was the mysterious working of the Divine hand. He was humbled, indeed, as to outward circumstances, but it was to be overruled for producing humility of a far more important character, and for his exaltation to a position of infinitely greater moment,—for his becoming a willing combatant in the service of the King of kings.

He had as a matter of course, to join a mess composed of those of similar station with himself, and to have all things in common with them. In this little party there was one man differing from all the rest. He was thoughtful and serious, and well conducted in his station: he was a man who had a Bible, and he read it too, and acted upon its truth. He felt for this young man, pitied his degradation, sympathised with him in the great difference he must feel in coming among persons of stations and habits so opposite to those to which he had been accustomed; he treated him tenderly, spoke to him kindly, invited him in their few leisure opportunities, to come and be with him, and to read the Bible with him; he gained upon him by degrees, he won his consent—they did read it together. And the Lord blessed the word of His grace. Its sacred and saving truths entered into his soul. He became a new man; and now he could submit to his humbled station, perform its duties, and enjoy the presence of God in his daily walk. His conversion was effected, his Christian character was formed, and was to be sustained only by the same means—the constant study of the Word of God.

Some years rolled on, and he had not been home to visit his friends, leave of absence being very difficult to obtain, nor might he be very

anxious to obtain it from the altered situation in which he would have to appear among them. But at length the ship came into port, and his steady character and habits being now decided, leave was granted him. On the occasion of his coming he paid me also a visit; but so altered was he that I did not at first sight recognise him. The features of the weather-beaten sailor strongly marked his countenance, but the alteration of another kind was the most striking. Instead of the wild and careless appearance of the ungovernable youth, there was the serenity and mildness of the truly humble Christian. Indeed, I have rarely met with an instance of more chastened humility. His knowledge of Scripture was abundant, his views of Christian truth simple and clear; all drawn from the Word of God. For at that time he had never had the opportunity of hearing the preaching of the Gospel;—the living preacher's voice had not had any share in his Christian growth. He gave me in substance the particulars I have related. There was no complaining, no murmuring at his position, or discontent at his duties. His time was limited, and he was most anxious to return to his post, even to the hour. He did so and I saw him no more; and probably, ere this, he may have entered that peaceful state where war and strife are unknown.

Such were the mysterious, but gracious, dealings of God with this once unwary youth, overruling what appeared to be a great evil for his eternal good, and making the punishment awarded him the means of bringing him into contact with that book, which is like a fire to melt the rocky heart.

But this is not all. I enquired of him if there were any more of his shipmates who had been induced to join them in reading the Bible too, and had partaken of equal blessing with himself, and he said with much hearty gratification, that there were some—one after another had been induced to join them, until at length their little party mustered fifteen, who met together as often as their duties would permit, to read the Word of God, and, as they were able, to strengthen and edify each other, although with much to endure from those who knew not the value of the Bible. But their officers, kindly did not allow them to be molested,—no doubt discovering, as many others did during the war, that those men who read their Bibles were most to be depended upon.

Thus fifteen souls were benefitted and comforted, and enabled to

maintain a Christian character in one of the most unpromising situations which could well be found, through the instrumentality of the Word of God. And all this, from one copy only, possessed by an individual who knew its value, and was led thereby to feel an interest in the spiritual welfare of those around him, and to invite them to come and participate in the comforts its blessed truths afford. How many have been the cases of the power of the Word of God to convert the soul and make wise the simple, even among those who "go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters," that day alone will discover when "the sea shall give up her dead." Let Christians then be encouraged to spread far and wide that blessed book, wherever opportunity is afforded them, in the full confidence that its Divine Author will not fail abundantly to prove that it is able to make men "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

GOD'S DESIGNS IN TRIALS.

HAS God seen fit to touch you in the tenderest part, to take away the dearest of those whom you call your own, a wife, husband, parent, child, sister, brother? Submit, though in tears; and believe, though you see it not, that He doeth all things well. He forbids you not to weep, but rather mingles His tears with yours. (John xi. 33, 35, 38.) He is pitiful (Psalm ciii. 13; cxlvii. 3; James v. 11,) and feels the stroke while He inflicts it. Endure His chastening; God dealeth with you as with sons. The affliction was needed, or He would not have sent it. Look earnestly to have it rightly directed by His wise and firm, yet tender faithfulness. Be not afraid, if in the first instance it has a convicting, humbling force, as with the widow of Sarepta: "Art thou come to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son?" It may be the effective means of bringing you a penitent to His footstool, to obtain remission of sin. Or it may serve an important purpose in reminding you of guiltiness, and reviving penitence within your forgetful heart. Or it may be intended to detach you from entanglements which were assuming too dangerous an influence over your affections and carefulness. Or it may be only to draw you aside into the wilderness, that there, removed from other attractions, the Lord may reveal himself to you

more lovingly, and pour into your soul the abundance of His consolation. This know, certainly, that in one or other of His many inscrutable ways, "He will make all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Be supremely intent on your love to Him. Then trust yourself and all that is yours unreservedly into His hands. The Lord fulfil His mercies to those of you who are now in sorrow, and prepare songs of thankfulness for you, when these bereavements, grievous in the endurance, shall at length bear the fruit of righteousness! May this fruit even now abound in you to the glory of God! (Heb. xii; 1 Peter i. 6, 7.)

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO BE COURTEOUS.

(1 PETER III. 8.)

EVERY wise farmer knows that if his young cattle be roughly treated, they will generally behave roughly to one another. Even little calves, before their horns begin to sprout, will fight and push each other about, if they are used to harsh treatment from the herd-boy. Moreover, it is a well-known fact that the young creatures grow all the faster, and fatten all the better, when they are treated with kindness and gentleness.

Surely we may take a lesson from this, in the discharge of higher duties. Does not every wise mother know that if the elder children are harshly treated, they will generally tyrannize over and ill-use the little ones? And for the same reason, the little ones soon learn to bicker and quarrel with one another.

One great point in the comfort of every family, rich and poor, is a habit of civility and kindness amongst themselves. Never allow the bigger and the stronger to strike or oppress the smaller and the weaker; nor the weaker and the smaller to tease and vex one another. If the elder sister is rough to the baby, she is teaching that same baby a lesson of unkindness to the next baby.

Never let the children contradict one another rudely; nor use unfeeling words; nor snatch away a favourite toy: little faults lead to great. The Bible precept, "Be courteous," includes all these things, and a great deal more. For true courtesy extends to the feelings of others as well as to their outward welfare.

It is of great importance, in the decent training of all children that order, neatness, and civility be kept up during meal-times. However frugal be the meal, however simple be the food, let each child be tidy and orderly while partaking of it. Let each little hand and face be well washed, and let the hair be nicely combed. If possible, let each child be provided with a separate plate and spoon ; these may be got very cheap. Order and neatness at meals are really points of so much moment in the comfort of every family, rich and poor, that we may be forgiven if the advice here offered seem a little intrusive.

A little incident in my own early childhood is still fresh in my remembrance. I happened to be calling at a very poor man's cottage at dinner-time. The labourer had just come in from his hard work. Dinner was quite ready. A very coarse, but clean cloth covered the table. The children's faces and hands had just been washed : and a plate and a little heap of salt were tidily laid out for each. The dinner was, indeed, a simple one : it consisted only of potatoes ; but thanks were as reverently given to the God of all goodness, as if it had been a feast. And the orderly manner in which the children ate their food might have been an example to the children of a nobleman. No doubt the blessing of God did descend on that meal and on that family.

And here we are brought back again to a truth which cannot too often be recalled to mind, namely, that without God's grace, no duty can be done aright ; and without his favour there can be no true blessing. Mothers, we may toil and fret for our children's good all in vain. We must draw our strength and wisdom from on high. If we seek them of God, through Christ Jesus, every toil will be sweetened, and every care softened.

TO A MOTHER.

MOTHER, o'er thy treasure bending,
O, how great that love of thine !
Like to His that knows no ending.
Burning in a flame divine ;
How thou watchest, how thou waitest,
O, how deep that love of thine !

Train thy child for worlds of glory,
 Teach his heart the Saviour's name,
 Tell him of Salvation's story,
 Shew him earth is false and vain ;
 Guide him rightly, watch him ever.
 Teach him soon the Saviour's name.

Let him see thine own endeavour
 Crowned with honour from above ;
 Let him see thee anxious ever,
 To restrain the feet that rove ;
 And thy hopes shall all be crowned,
 Crowned with favour from above.

Mother watch through life thy treasure,
 Guide his reason and his will ;
 Point him upward, leave him never,
 And thy hopes he shall fulfil ;
 Pray in earnest for God's blessing,
 And it shall on thee distil.

WAS HE A HERO?*

MIDNIGHT IN ROGER'S HOME.

"I AM glad she can't know it: it would have broken her heart, I'm certain." The words were groaned forth in a wretched home, in one of the blackest alleys of a large manufacturing town, and the speaker was a boy of fifteen, whose face could be but dimly seen by the fitful light of the fading fire-flame, over which he was crouching.

No one else was in the room, for it was nearly midnight, and the younger ones had gone to bed ; but Roger Milbrook knelt on the hearth-stone, struggling wildly with the agony of shame, of sorrow, and of fear which burdened his heart.

"What shall I do? What can a boy like me do? Four mouths to feed, and I've but five shillings a week:" and Roger passed his fingers hastily through his disordered hair once or twice, while his forehead contracted with deep thought.

For a moment or two he gazed earnestly into the deadening embers, and then by degrees, large tears that he would have scorned

* Wertheim, Macintosh, and Hunt, 24, Paternoster Row.

to let any one see, gathered in his eyes, and leaning his head against the mantle-piece he gave vent to the weight of grief which oppressed him.

"Why? oh! why should we be disgraced in this way? Oh! why did Walter do it?" he sobbed. "Haven't we had troubles enough without this one? Oh! God, why didn't I die?" The words were wrung from a heart so full of misery, that they had an earnestness and meaning in them which was pitiable in one so young; but God, who heard the cry, sent the answer, though it was only by the lips of a little timid shrinking girl.

"Roger!" said a soft voice beside him.

"Get along, do," he said impatiently, "I thought all of you were in bed ages ago."

"Not me! I've been listening for you to come in, and then I got up quietly, not to wake Peggie, and dressed by the moonlight, and came down."

"I wish you'd stopped where you was," was the surly reply.

"I couldn't," was all the answer, but it was spoken in a quivering voice.

There was silence in the room for a few minutes, and then Roger spoke more kindly.

"Go back to bed, Jeanie."

"I want to hear of Walter," she said timidly.

A groan of shame and agony burst from her brother.

"Tell me," said Jeanie, slipping her arm round his neck.

"He did it!—he did it! He's in prison, with hard labour for two years."

Jeanie sank down as she heard the words; lower and lower she crouched, until her head was bowed to the ground: and though she uttered no sound, Roger knew from the action how his words had entered into her heart.

He came to her side; all his roughness was gone; he was once more the brother who loved her, and would take care of her, and shield her to the death: and as she lay there in all the helplessness of her sorrow, a feeling of strength to work and to suffer for her sake came into Roger's heart, and made a man of him.

"Jeanie," he said hoarsely, "you mustn't grieve or fret so; we must think and act for ourselves now; remember, we've Peggie and Archie to work for."

She did not answer but rose up partly, and knelt by the fire, by the light of which Roger could see that the colour had quite left her cheeks, and that she was trembling violently.

"Jeanie," he whispered, "Jeanie, come!" She came close to him, and his arms were locked tightly round her, while her head fell powerlessly on his shoulder. She tried to speak, but her quivering lips refused to obey.

"I am glad and thankful mother can't know it," he muttered: "ain't you Jeanie?"

"Yes."

"I never was glad before, that she was dead," said Roger; "but it would have killed her to know that one of us was a drunkard and a thief."

A cry broke from Jeanie at his words.

"Don't, Jeanie dear, don't you fret for him. I hate him, I do—hate him, Jeanie, as I never knew I could hate any one."

"Our brother?" murmured his sister.

"Brother or no brother, he ain't one of us any longer."

"Roger?"

"Yes!"

"What are we to do?"

"Aye, what are we to do, that's the thing? I know what I'll do."

"What?"

"Go and work in the factory, and get some more money that way."

"And me?"

"What can you do you poor little thing?"

"God will show me," answered his sister quietly and gravely.

"We can sell this furniture," said Roger, looking round him on the already half-dismantled room; for several things had gone long since to satisfy the selfish craving of the elder brother for drink.

"Did you speak to Walter, Roger?" said Jeanie, after some time.

"Yes! as he was coming out of the dock; he said to me, 'Take care of them all, Roger,' and I said 'Yes,' and that was all,"

"Was he very miserable?"

"Yes! he was crying then."

"Poor, poor Walter," sobbed little Jeanie, whose tender heart ached for the brother who had brought disgrace and misery upon them, just because he was her brother, and was in trouble.

Suddenly the little girl slipped from Roger's side, and striking a match she lit a candle which stood on the table.

"I was forgetting Roger," she said, in as cheerful a tone as she could, "I got your supper all ready, and you must eat some."

"No! I don't want it."

"Please, Roger, please try, just a little bit:" and Jeanie had spread one corner of the table in a minute with bread, cold bacon, and remnants of cheese; the fare was coarse even of its kind, but it was all laid neatly, and everything was perfectly clean, so that Roger was tempted by the sight of it, especially as it was the first sight of food which he had had for nearly four-and twenty hours—for the whole day had been anxiously spent about the doors of the courthouse in waiting for news of his brother.

When he had satisfied his hunger, and Jeanie had removed the things, she came again to his side.

"Roger," she whispered, "we're in a bad way."

"God knows it," replied Roger, almost fiercely.

"Yes, God does know it; and so let us ask Him to help us in it, and teach us to do what's right."

"It don't much signify now," said her brother.

"Oh! Roger, yes it does, more than ever, because we're all alone."

"Well, ask Him." Jeanie knelt down by his side, and prayed to their Father in heaven, who knew their troubles, and had promised to be their Helper. They rose comforted and strengthened: and as Jeanie threw her arms around her brother's neck and bade him good night, he whispered, "Jeanie, you must help me to be strong."

Alas! for the lonely children, grown thus prematurely old; waking up to the stern realities of a life of toil, of want, of temptation, and grief,—to the weary struggle,—to the daily hardships,—to the grinding, crushing weight of the iron hand of poverty.

Jeanie went quietly back to the bed she had left, and soon forgot her troubles in a sound sleep beside her little sister: but until the morning light struggled through the mists of night, and began to dawn over the grimy roofs of the dark alley, and came slowly creeping into the room where he was, Roger sat with his face buried in his hands, thinking mournfully and bitterly of the past, but seeking help for the cloudy future—and it was not sought in vain.

TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD, GO AND WHEN HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.

It has been remarked that, "this is the age when children rule their parents—not the parents their children." However true this may be, (and to a great extent it is to be feared it is so), we know that there are many families that own no head, nor acknowledge any superior power. The children of such families, when grown up and scattered, must be bad citizens. "The boy makes the man;" and the children not trained to obedience to their parents, and at home are not likely, when their powers are developed into strength and manhood, to submit to rule and authority. It is to the young and rising generation we must look for the men and women of the next age. What care then should parents take to train their children in the way they should go, lest, when they are laid low in the dust, the deeds of their children should rise up against them. "Disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft,"—so saith the inspired Scriptures; and "the disobedient shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." Parents, require of your children instant obedience; it will make them decided as to the course they have to pursue, and they will understand when bidden to act, that they are not to make many words, but do it instantly; and soon shall they find happiness in the doing. Your own mind will be released from the pain that disobedience brings upon you, and your children will rise up to honour your opinion, and place that reliance and confidence in you that your faithful conduct towards them demands, and shall gently slope your pathway to the grave. Above all, teach them to fear and honour God; then obedience and honour to yourself will flow as surely as streams from the fountain. (1 Sam. ii. 30.)

" Sow then the seed—that seed will spring and give
Rich fruits and fairest flowers that will survive
All chance of change: and though the night may come,
And then the deeper darkness of the tomb,
A sun more bright than ours shall bid them grow;
And on the very grave HOPE'S BUDS will blow;
And blow like those sweet flowers, that pluck'd, ne'er lose
Their freshness, and their fragrance, and their hues."

Read Gen. xviii. 19; Ex. xx. 12; Lev. xix. 3; Josh. xxiv. 15; 1 Sam. iii. 13; 1 Kings i. 6; Prov. xiii. 24; xix. 18; xxii. 6, 15; xxiii. 13, 14; Ezek. xvi. 44; Matt. xiv. 8; Eph. vi. 1—4; Rom. i. 30; Tim. iii. 4—12; v. 8; 2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 2, 15.

STRENGTH FOR THE STRONG.

AN officer stood on the deck of a small steamer, and looked out anxiously. The vessel was making her way through broken ice. Near her was an iceberg 60 or 70 feet high, over which the sea was breaking, and throwing up showers of spray. The waves were high, and often masses of ice were hurled against the sharp iron-plated bow of the steamer with such force, that she shook violently, the bells rang, and the crew were almost knocked down. Sometimes the engines were quite stopped by ice choking the screw, and it was some minutes before the latter could be got to revolve again. Had it broken, or had the rudder been destroyed, the ship and the crew must, as it seemed, have been lost. Large pieces of ice lay around: a single blow from any of them might have been instant destruction. So hour after hour passed, and with an anxious heart the captain still stood on the deck. His demeanour was calm and unmoved, inspiring all around him with hope and courage. At length after eighteen hours of peril, the steamer reached the clear sea; the danger was over for that time, and the exhausted captain retired to rest.

How full of gratitude his heart was to God, his interesting journal tells; whilst he acknowledges that had he only relied on self in such fearful hours, he could not have remained so calm. Happily for him, he relied on that power which is almighty, and deliverance was granted. That captain was the brave McClintock: that little steamer was the Fox, on her arctic expedition.

There are times when the most courageous man needs a strength greater than his own to uphold him. Where shall he find it? By coming, with confiding faith, in earnest prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ to God, who is the source of all real strength, of all true courage. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isa. xl. 29—31).

Come then to him, and in times of peril, in times of anxiety, you will be able to say with the Psalmist, "In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul." (Psalm cxxxviii. 3).

“
“

THE FAMILY PREACHER.

A FEW PARTING WORDS.

A Farewell Sermon

PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S (SEAMEN'S) CHURCH, WHITECHAPEL,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 12th, 1862,

BY THE REV. W. H. F. ROBSON,

CURATE.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts xx. 32.

THESE words are a part of St. Paul's pathetic farewell to the elders of the Church at Ephesus. He had made a long stay in their city, and his labours had been marvellously successful. When he first came he began his holy work by preaching, as was his custom, in the Jewish synagogue. For three months he there laboured boldly among his own countrymen, "arguing and endeavouring to convince his hearers of all that related to the kingdom of God." Some heard his words with great gladness, repented and believed the Gospel; but others not only closed their eyes, and hardened their hearts, but even calumniated the way of salvation before the multitude. Great must have been the apostle's sorrow at finding his message rudely rejected by God's ancient people: but his course was plain. When the Jews refused to hear he must turn to the Gentiles. He did so; and in the school-room of one Tyrannus he laboured daily in the Gospel, so that all the dwellers in the province of Asia, both Jews and Gentiles, heard the Word of the Lord Jesus. St. Paul's conduct in that city forms indeed a beautiful example for the guidance of every Christian minister. His was no light employment, no sinecure. From the first day that he came among them they knew,—they must have known,—that he was deeply in earnest for their soul's welfare. His was not the life of a mere popularity-seeker, for though "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles," he served the Lord "in all humility of mind." Not only did he daily preach to the crowds that assembled to hear him; but as he himself expressly tells us, "from

The Family Preacher, December, 1862.

house to house," night and day, in season and out of season, with many tears, he ceased not to warn and teach his beloved converts. He had many trials to endure, but he could bear them, for there was One in whom he believed, who supplied all his needs. Patiently, fervently, affectionately, he did his Master's work, "coveting no man's silver, or gold, or apparel," labouring with his own hands, supporting not only himself but some poor members of his flock, and glorying in the proclamation of those great foundation truths of his Lord's Gospel, "Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." And of course his labours were blest. A large Church was formed. The minds of men were stirred. There was a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The pretenders to magical arts who infested the city, came and confessed their wicked deeds; and to show the sincerity of their repentance burnt their costly books in the sight of all men. Hitherto Ephesus had been a city almost wholly given to idolatry. Standing at the head of the harbour was the far-famed temple of Diana—the pride of the country—one of the seven wonders of the world. Thousands came yearly to visit the shrine; but now it was found that, through the steady earnest work of the apostle, the trade in idolatry began to fail; and those who made silver shrines of the goddess were provoked into open tumult. But "mightily grew the Word of the Lord, and prevailed" against all opposition. For three years did St. Paul labour on, spending and being spent, in his Master's cause at Ephesus; and then at last, with much sorrow, he left the city to visit other parts, and to plant the standard of the cross among other nations. He preached throughout Macedonia, and then passed on into Greece. But the time came for the apostle to make his journey towards Jerusalem for the last time. He determined to be there on the day of Pentecost. On his road to the holy city he felt persuaded that dire calamities were about to befall him. He would probably never see his beloved converts at Ephesus again. The ship in which he was, sailed past the city, and he could not but feel the warmest interest in the welfare of his spiritual children there. At Miletus, a port thirty miles down the coast, the vessel put in. From that town he sent quickly to the ministers at Ephesus, to hasten to him, in order that they might receive his farewell exhortation. The elders came; and we have in the chapter before us an account of the very words that St. Paul spoke on that sad occasion. We may easily imagine the scene. The ship, about to convey the apostle away for ever, was waiting to weigh her anchor. The apostle stood on the beach; around him clustered the faithful servants of God, eagerly listening to catch the words as they fell from their dear teacher's lips. In tenderest affection he reminded them of his conduct when he lived among them; of his tears, of his trials, of his dangers, of his labours night and day, and of his one great message to them. "And now, behold," said he, "I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Faithfully he then warned them that danger was at hand; and touchingly he reminded them of his preaching and living when he staid amongst them. They were about to lose their earthly leader for ever; but there was One on whose strength they could rely; One whose presence was a tower of defence. To Him—his God and theirs—the apostle committed them. To his word—the one guide for the erring sons of men—the apostle commended them; feeling sure that in God, and in his Word alone, could they find satisfaction

and safety. "I commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

And now the parting time had come. St. Paul kneeled upon the shore, and the elders with him; and they lifted up their hearts and voices to that God, to whose care the Apostle had commended them. The prayer was over. They rose from their knees. The Ephesian elders clung to their beloved Apostle with the embrace of love, and wept upon his neck, and kissed him, "sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake that they should see his face no more; and they accompanied him unto the ship." Oh, what a pattern minister St. Paul was! What utter fearlessness for self! What deep anxiety for the welfare of others! What mighty love for the souls of men! What childlike confidence in God does this parting address of his exhibit! What minister of Christ could dare to use such language as this now? Where are our tears, night and day, for our flocks? When are we filled with the spirit of devotion to our Master's cause such as St. Paul had? Who of us can make bold to say, "I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God?" No! no! Our language must be,—the language of the very holiest and best of us must be,—*"Lord, be not extreme to mark what we have done amiss."* *"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."*

Brethren! beloved in the Lord! it has been my great privilege to labour for the Lord a little while amongst you. And now, at the conclusion of my ministry here, the thought will rush into my mind, and I cannot get rid of it, Have I been faithful to your precious souls? Have I spoken plainly, in no smooth terms, against sin? Have I striven to exalt my Master, and to lay the sinner low? Has it been the one great object of my life and ministry among you to preach Him,—as the only sacrifice for sin—as the one only righteousness for fallen man—as your Prophet, your Priest, your King, your example, your all? Have I, while I warned the sinner, fed the flock of God, giving to each his portion of meat in due season? My language to-night, and for the remainder of my days, must be, *"Wash my ministry, O Lord, in the blood of Jesus Christ."* Brethren, we are all of us but poor judges of our own performances. We always form too good an opinion of our own actions; but this I may say, If I have been at all faithful to my charge; if I have, in any humble way, followed a very far off, in the steps of the Apostle, it is to grace that the praise must be given.

In reading this beautiful farewell charge, I thought there was but one passage in it, that a minister of God might dare to preach from on such an occasion as the present. When St. Paul speaks of his humility, we must hide our eyes as we call to mind our vanity and pride. When he speaks of his fervent zeal, we must blush as we think upon our lukewarmness and carelessness. When he speaks of his fidelity to his charge, we must pray that our faithlessness and worldliness may not be mentioned against us. But when he speaks of his desires and prayers for the future welfare of his flock, we, I think, may join with him. I may and do say to night, from a warm heart, "I commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

Brethren! beloved brethren! *I commend you to God.* I know there are some

before me who have just begun to run the Christian race. They know very little of themselves, and of the deceitfulness of their own heart; still less do they know of Jesus; and less still of the world that surrounds them. I tremble when I think of the danger before you, my younger brethren and sisters in the Lord. I am not very old, but I know that the path of the young convert is full of snares;—the world with its bewitching pleasures;—sin with her painted face;—the devil with his lying words;—your own heart with its deceitful counsels! Your piety may be nipped in the bud before you know it; your first love, now so ardent, may grow cold before you think it; your simple faith, now so childlike, may fail before you are aware of it. Ay! the very frank, open-heartedness of youth, which we all so much admire, may be the occasion of your falling. What security have you? What comfort have I when I think over your future? Men may tempt you. Preachers may deceive you. Churches may lead you astray. There is one security, and but one;—one friend and but one. Your God. I commend you to him. To *God the Father* I commend you. Let him be your Father. Tell him your wants, your wishes, your plans, your hopes, your fears. Say, not only to night, but every day, “My Father, be thou the guide of my youth.” To *God the Son* I commend you. Let him be your Saviour, your sacrifice, your righteousness. He shed his precious blood for you. He loves you now. He will love you ever. He, “above all others, well deserves the name of friend.” Study his character. Meditate upon his work. Feed on his precious body and blood. Walk by his perfect example. May ever your language be, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do.” To *God the Holy Spirit* I commend you. Let him be your sanctifier, your comforter. Honour his work, his office. Wait for his influence. Be strong in his grace. Grieve not that Spirit. Resist not that Spirit. Quench not that Spirit. “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.” My younger brethren, I commend you to your God.

There are some here who have been servants of God for some little time past. To you, my friends, almost the same remarks apply. Let me ask you, Are you growing in grace? Do you find, upon self-examination, that the world is becoming more attractive to you than it was, or is Jesus, growing daily more precious to you? The great danger to Christians who have been for some converted, is that of spiritual declension. I dare not shut my eyes to the fact. Many run well for a time, and then they lose their first love—they lose the deep delight in prayer they once had; they lose that longing for Christian communion that once was theirs; they lose that thirst after Christ, his word, his people, his house, his ordinances, that once they felt. Brethren, I leave with you a searching text of Scripture, “Are the consolations of God small with thee?—is there any secret thing with thee?” Job xv. 11. Beloved brethren, I commend you to God. “He is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” “Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.” Do but look up to Him for help, and you shall find, as thousands have before you, and you yourselves have in times past, that in the hour of your deepest need he will not desert you. Press on! press on! I beg you think not that you have attained your maturity. There are heights of God’s grace that you have never reached; there are depths of his love that you have never fathomed. My parting prayer for you is, that of the

same apostle, for the same Ephesian church, a few years later: "That God would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." But there are some here, I know, who are thoughtless; careless; Christless souls. I see them before me. Oh my dear friends it makes one sick at heart to think of parting with you. What! what will become of you? You are daily, hourly, ripening for wrath. Sunday after Sunday have you listened to the most earnest appeals: if not from my lips, certainly from the lips of another whose privilege it is to minister to you. But you are cold and hard still. Ay! growing colder, harder, week by week. The love of Jesus melts you not. The joys of heaven move you not. The terrors of hell terrify you not. You seem past hope. The Gospel seems to you like an idle tale. The preachers of that Gospel are "like those that mock" to you. You think all is right with you, but all is wrong. You are like a ship, with an idiot at her helm, drifting on to destruction. What can I say to you? "I commend you to God." Oh that the Spirit of God would break down the stubbornness of your nature! Oh that you would fix your eyes on Jesus, and never take them off! Come to him now in prayer! Be thoughtful, be serious, be sober! Remember you have a precious, a never-dying soul that must be saved or lost. If you perish it will be your own fault. God hath said, ay! hath sworn by himself, "As I live saith the Lord God I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." If you perish, you perish in spite of warning, in spite of entreaties; you perish beneath the sound of the Gospel, while the offer of mercy is ringing in your ears. Brethren, beloved! old and young, rich and poor, saint and sinner, I commend you to God, because God can and will "supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

But in my text St. Paul commends the Ephesian elders to *the Word of God's grace*; for this is the divinely appointed means for men to arrive at the knowledge of God. Dear brethren, that word has been preached to you from this pulpit many a time and oft, and what is still better, you have it in your Bible. Oh, I can well understand that St. Paul should commend that word to the Ephesians. He knew that after his departure "grievous wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the flock," and that even "from themselves would men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." How were the Ephesians to test what they heard? How were they to know when their teachers taught them truth, or error? There was but one sure; one safe standard. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."

My friends there is danger in the present day—yes, great danger,—that the traditions of men should be placed before you as the truth of God. How shall we know what, to believe? There are many systems, and creeds, and sects in the world, and they all profess to be the truth. How shall an unlettered man know what is truth? Let him hold fast by God's word. Let him make that the rule of his faith and practice, and he cannot go far astray.

There are certain fundamental truths which I earnestly beg of you ever to keep in mind. Never lose sight of the utter helplessness and sinfulness of man. Man has "no power of himself to help himself." "He cannot by his own natural strength and good works, prepare himself to faith and calling upon God." Let this never be absent from your thoughts. Once lose sight of it and other errors are sure to creep in. Again let us take fast hold of the all-sufficiency of Christ's work. This blessed truth has been much assailed lately. Let us never let it go. Christ's life was a perfect obedience to God's law for us. Christ's death was a perfect "sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." Nothing must be added to His work. No merits of our own must be thought of. The language of our hearts must be

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling ;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone ;
Thou must save, and thou alone !

Once more ; let us never forget also, the work of the Spirit of God. He is the author of spiritual life. He is the author of prayer. He "bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." He reveals to us what we are ; what sin is ; what God and holiness are. He leads us on step by step, from grace to grace, purifying us and making us fit for the master's presence and the master's service. These truths, my friends, are some of the great doctrines of the scriptures which men are in danger of forgetting. Thank God, they have been preached here from the first. Thank God, they will, I believe, be preached here. Oh that they may never be forgotten in years to come by any who shall occupy the pulpit or the pews ! I beg you moreover to make "the word of God's grace"—the scriptures—the guide and comfort of your lives. The time will be sure to come when you will need such a guide and such comfort. The time of temptation will come to all of us sooner or later. My seafaring friends, you are specially exposed to temptation when you first come ashore. Oh ! what a blessing in such seasons to know the power of God's Word. To know Satan when he comes to you as an angel of light ; and to be able to resist Satan with—"It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. It is written, again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." And some day, too, the time of personal sorrow or bereavement will come. It seems far off now, but it may be very near. Some day that child will be snatched away from you—the darling of your eyes cut down at a stroke. Thy husband, O wife, in whom thou didst confide, who was so worthy of thy respect and esteem, and love, thou shalt see wasting away daily before thine eyes. Thy wife, O husband—the wife of thy bosom, the wife of thy youth, the mother of thy dear ones—thou shalt mourn to her grave. Or thou shalt lose thy property, thy position, thy name, thy character. Oh, what a comfort then to feel the power of some sweet text, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me." Oh what a support to feel then that "all

things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." And some day also the time of our own death will come. How soon to some of us! This day I read the beautiful service of our church over one, who but a few weeks ago, was in the full vigour of young manhood. Ah, when you feel Death's cold embrace, and find yourself carried, against your will, to the shores of the dark cold river, how blessed then to hear "when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee:" and to be able to exclaim "When I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Yes, you will find in all these circumstances, that God's word—the "word of his grace"—is able to build you up. To build you up so that you may resist the fiery darts of the devil. To build you up so that you may bear the sorrows and trials of the world. To build you up, so that "when your earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, you may have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Oh, my brethren, let this precious volume, I beseech you, be your constant companion and guide; your rule of faith, your comfort in distress, your counsellor in prosperity.

One more thought. The God whose word is able to build you up, is "*able to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*" What is that inheritance? It is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; it is "the rest that remaineth for the people of God."

"Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end."

There shall be no farewells there, no widow's wail there, no orphan's cry there. "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell among them, and they shall be his people; and God himself shall dwell among them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." This is your inheritance, dear child of God. You are sanctified now, "Sanctified by God the Father, in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit;" you shall one day hear the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Happy art thou, O Israel, saved of the Lord."

And now, my dearly beloved in the Lord, one word, and I have done. My short ministry here is over; with all its faults, with all its errors, with all its sins, it is over. What have been its results? God knows. Have I wilfully kept back anything that was profitable to you? Have I wilfully shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God? If so, God pardon it. Amen. But if I have set before you the way of life and the way of death, as I think I have; I ask you, in all solemnity, in all affection, how have you received the message? **THE DAY SHALL DECLARE IT.** God grant that my feeble efforts may not have been in vain. Dearly beloved people, we shall probably never meet again on earth; we shall drop off one by one into the lone some grave. But we shall meet again one day; yes, we shall meet again. Where shall we meet again? At the bar of our

great God. When shall we meet again? On the great day for which all other days were made. How shall we meet again? Aye, how! Shall we be separated then, as now? God forbid. It need not be so; no, it need not be so. The Saviour's blood is now ready to cleanse the vilest and the worst, and he will carry on the good work that he has commenced; "He will not leave thee nor forsake thee for ever." Do but cling to him, and, if I am enabled to persevere, we shall meet again in glory everlasting.

Now I have done. My dear friends, my beloved in the Lord, the flock of God's pasture, the first I ever tended, the flock I love, farewell! I go my way, to feed a distant fold; you stay where we have often loved to meet together. "The Lord watch between me and you when we are absent one from another." "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." "Brethren, pray for us." "Now, the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever." Amen. Farewell, dear brethren, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Farewell!



